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# Hansard

## Official Report of Debates

### Legislative Assembly of Ontario

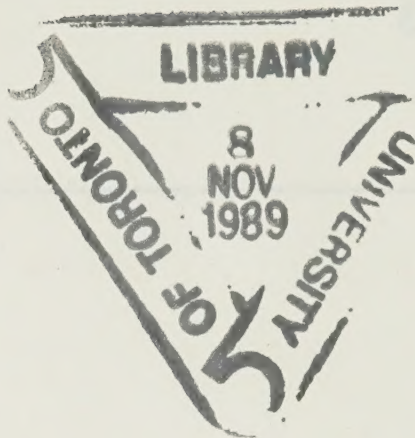


**First Session, 34th Parliament**  
Tuesday, November 15, 1988

Speaker: Honourable Hugh A. Edighoffer  
Clerk of the House: Claude L. DesRosiers

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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday, November 15, 1988

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayers.

## INTRODUCTION OF MEMBER FOR WELLAND-THOROLD

**Mr. Speaker:** I beg to inform the House that the Clerk has received from the chief election officer, and laid upon the table, a certificate of a by-election in the electoral district of Welland-Thorold.

### Clerk of the House:

Mr. Claude L. DesRosiers  
Clerk of the Legislative Assembly  
Queen's Park  
Toronto, Ontario.

Dear Mr. DesRosiers:

This is to certify that, in view of a writ of election dated the 23rd day of September, 1988, issued by the Honourable Lieutenant Governor of the province of Ontario, and addressed to Helen Durley, returning officer for the electoral district of Welland-Thorold, for the election of a member to represent the said electoral district of Welland-Thorold in the Legislative Assembly of this province, in the room of Mel Swart, Esq., who, since his election as representative of the said electoral district of Welland-Thorold, has resigned his seat, Peter Kormos has been returned as duly elected as appears by the return of the said writ of election, which is now lodged of record in my office.

(Signed) Warren R. Bailie, chief election officer; Toronto, November 11, 1988.

**Mr. B. Rae:** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present to you Peter Kormos, member-elect for the electoral district of Welland-Thorold, who has taken the oath and signed the roll and now claims the right to take his seat.

**Mr. Speaker:** Let the honourable member take his seat.

Peter Kormos, Esq., member-elect for the electoral district of Welland-Thorold, having taken the oath and subscribed the roll, took his seat.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

**Mr. R. F. Johnston:** The day following municipal elections, I think it is incumbent upon

us to congratulate all those who were victorious yesterday and commiserate with those who, unfortunately, were not victorious.

I would also like to say that, from our caucus's perspective, there are three people I would like to single out. Helen Kennedy from the office of the member for Lake Nipigon (Mr. Pouliot); Evelyn Paterson, constituency assistant to the member for Windsor-Riverside (Mr. D. S. Cooke), and Sandra Bussin, a constituent of the member for Beaches-Woodbine (Ms. Bryden), members from our bargaining units, have all been elected, and we are delighted to see that.

Also, I would like to say how delighted we, as a caucus, are to have a majority of New Democrats back on the board of education in the city of Toronto to finally reverse some of those terrible trends that were starting to take place there.

The people of Toronto have spoken very strongly about the need for a livable city, a city where speculation is not welcome, I say to the Treasurer (Mr. R. F. Nixon), where overdevelopment is seen as a bad thing. We now will have a reform council there to undo some of the damage that has been done in the last term.

### TORONTO AREA TRANSPORTATION

**Mr. Cousens:** With the new Metro council, new regional councils and new municipal councils, the big question is, what will be different three years from now? What changes will be made? Will the traffic chaos in Metro be better or worse?

This morning, I saw Metropolitan Toronto and greater Metro from the CHFI-FM airplane with Darryl Dahmer. Few cities are as beautiful. This city, however, is more attractive from up there than from behind the steering wheel of a car. As the Progressive Conservative critic for Metro and greater Metro issues, I wanted to see the traffic at first hand.

I now have more questions than answers. Who is going to take the leadership role in solving the traffic crisis: the new Metro council, the local regional councils, or is the province going to do its job? What is going to be done first: GO trains, more subways or more roads? When is commuter transit going to become a priority?



Twenty-seven per cent of the population is using public transit. That means we have to increase that far more to get more than three quarters of the people who are just driving their cars or vehicles. How can we encourage more commuters to use public transit? When will the province begin to build the Sheppard subway?

What can we do about drivers who slow up traffic? What can we do about drivers who do not maintain their vehicles and stall traffic? What can be done about road maintenance so we do not just close off one road when another one needs to be opened?

**Mr. Speaker:** The member's time has now expired.

**Mr. Cousens:** We have a priority in this province to get the traffic moving in Metro Toronto. Let's begin to do it.

#### ONTARIO MEDAL FOR POLICE BRAVERY

**Mr. Adams:** The Ontario Medal for Police Bravery is one of the most prestigious honours awarded by the province. This year three constables received the medal for their heroic efforts. Two of the recipients serve on the Peterborough Police Force.

At great risk to his own personal safety, Constable Tim Farquharson saved the life of a young boy who was trapped by fire. Fighting intense heat and smoke, he located the boy and carried him to safety. In a similar emergency, Constable Jim Wright rescued a woman from her burning home. He broke down the door, fought his way through thick black smoke and carried the unconscious victim to safety.

The valiant efforts of these officers are worthy of our greatest respect and admiration. It was my pleasure to congratulate them in person at the investiture ceremony last evening. I am sure all members of the House join me in recognizing their outstanding service to the people of Peterborough and of Ontario. They represent all that is best in our police forces.

I am sure that constables Wright and Farquharson would be pleased for me to use the time remaining to mention Drug Awareness Week. The Peterborough police are part of a widespread community net involved in this drug awareness program. They, their proud chief—Kevin McAlpine—the Peterborough Police Commission and the men and women of the Peterborough Police Force join me in saying to the people of Ontario, "Believe in yourselves; be drug-free."

#### INTERNATIONAL WRITERS IN PRISON DAY

**Mr. Philip:** Today is International Writers in Prison Day. Jan Bauer and Susan Crean have pointed out in today's *Globe and Mail* that, as of last July, 305 journalists and writers were in some way imprisoned or awaiting trial.

While we can take some satisfaction today that the numbers are decreasing as a result of a more enlightened policy in the Soviet Union, there are still 20 writers or journalists experiencing confinement there. Furthermore, the atrocities continue in places like South Africa and Latin America. So far this year, 49 writers have been released, but another 33 cases of imprisonment or disappearances have been reported. We must continue in a democratic society to reaffirm the freedom of the press and also to expose those instances of human rights abuses in other jurisdictions.

The 13th report of the standing committee on the Ombudsman is still awaiting debate and endorsement in this House. This report, initiated by a resolution introduced by the late Jim Renwick, provides concrete proposals on how we as legislators can work to save lives and reduce tortures in countries less democratic than our own. I hope that on this special day we can reaffirm that the 13th report of the Ombudsman's committee will not continue to gather dust on our shelves.

#### TRADE WITH UNITED STATES

**Mr. Harris:** The Premier (Mr. Peterson), following the advice of his technology council, wants to turn the province into Sweden, and so I am perplexed that the Premier would support the policies of John Turner who, as noted in the *Wall Street Journal* yesterday, wants to turn Canada into Argentina.

"Juan" Turner is peddling the same old snake oil of phoney populism and protectionism that kept Juan Perón in office and Argentina at the bottom of the economic heap. "Juan" Turner is peddling a prescription for economic stagnation, higher inflation and the Hudson's Bay peso. He would have us believe that protectionism is a substitute for productivity and that the best way of meeting the global competitive challenge is to run from it.

The real danger facing this country is not that the free trade agreement will make us an economic colony but that rejection of the agreement will make us an economic backwater. The free trade agreement is the acid test of this



government's commitment to industrial restructuring and international competitiveness.

In opposing the agreement and endorsing "Juan" Turner's policy of growth through protectionism, the Ontario Liberal government has demonstrated the hollowness of its rhetoric and its total failure to understand the opportunities that the free trade agreement offers this province, its producers, its consumers and its workers.

#### CANADIAN WARPLANE HERITAGE MUSEUM

**Ms. Collins:** On something more factual, Mr. Speaker, I wish to inform this House of the historical conservation efforts of the Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum, located in my riding at the Hamilton Airport in Mount Hope.

Operated by a charitable, nonprofit corporation, this museum was established in 1973. Its aim is to preserve and maintain in flying condition the aircraft flown by Canadians in military service in the Second World War and in Korea. This museum has assembled an outstanding collection of over 40 aircraft and hundreds of historical aviation artefacts.

Included in this collection is a Lancaster Mark 10 bomber, which played a significant role in the defeat of Nazi Germany. There are only two airworthy examples remaining in the entire world.

The Lancaster bomber at Mount Hope was restored after nine years of painstaking, mostly volunteer labour. It is dedicated to the memory of Victoria Cross recipient Andrew Mynarski, who lost his life attempting to save the tail gunner in a crippled Lancaster during the last world war. The first official flight of the restored bomber took place on September 24 of this year at the Hamilton Airport in front of 25,000 enthusiastic spectators.

I am sure that all members of this House join me in congratulating the Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum for this magnificent achievement and for its ongoing efforts to preserve a living link with an invaluable part of our nation's history.

#### MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

**Ms. Bryden:** The municipal elections across the province have brought some new faces to city halls and school boards, but they have also demonstrated the defects in the new provincial legislation affecting both municipal and school trustee electors that we put through with some haste this year.

The lack of an adequate tax rebate policy for political contributions at the local level made many contests a David and Goliath situation for challengers to incumbents. I understand that only one municipality and one school board took advantage of the local option to institute a rebate policy, mainly, I think, because the rebates had to come out of municipal taxes, whereas at the federal and provincial levels they come out of broader tax sources. The electors are therefore denied the same treatment of election contributions at the local level as at the federal and provincial level.

I think the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr. Grandmaître) should look into the changes that are needed in the Municipal Elections Act and the Municipal Act affecting elections long before the next election and perhaps bring in some recommendations within the next year.

**Hon. Mr. Conway:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to seek unanimous consent to make a few remarks on behalf of the government about our new colleague.

Agreed to.

#### MEMBER FOR WELLAND-THOROLD

**Hon. Mr. Conway:** I thank my colleague the leader of the third party. I had somehow expected the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. B. Rae) perhaps to rise in his place and begin this brief—

Interjections.

**Hon. Mr. Conway:** On behalf of the government, I want to extend to the new member for Welland-Thorold (Mr. Kormos) our heartiest congratulations on his victory on what we know is for him, his family and friends, a very special and happy day.

Certainly I have had the opportunity in the recent past to meet and chat with the new member. He certainly seems to be a very lively and a very interesting fellow. I am very much looking forward to working with him in the coming weeks and months and years of this parliament.

I have noted that much has been said about the honourable member in terms of the very lively spirit he brings to his responsibilities. All of us know—and I believe his predecessor is with us under the press gallery—certainly we would all have to say that the new member for Welland-Thorold truly does have very big boots to fill. Those of us on this side of the Speaker's chair have long waited for someone both to put the boots to the New Democratic Party and, we hear, perhaps even to put the boots on the leader of the NDP.



**Mr. Brandt:** I welcome this opportunity to join with the government House leader to offer congratulations and the very best wishes to the new member for Welland-Thorold, who is taking his seat among his new colleagues today in this very venerable House.

I would like to say to the member that it is, in fact, as he will find out shortly, a rather select group, with a degree of collegiality that does surface from time to time, in spite of our political differences. The fact is that we do have 130 of us in this House to represent well over nine million people in Ontario.

I recognize the very heavy responsibility that rests on everyone's shoulders in that respect and I know that the member will bear his fair share of the load in connection with not only his own riding but the interests of all of the people of Ontario on a broader spectrum.

Let me offer my congratulations to him and very best wishes on a successful career, whatever length his career might be in this place. Some of us serve for longer periods of time; some of us serve for shorter periods of time. I wish the member good health in whatever length of time he happens to choose for his own career.

I would like to paraphrase the government House leader, if I might, by saying that he has a large pair of noncowboy boots to fill in terms of his new responsibilities. But let me just say, as a member who has been here for about eight years now, that I join with the kind of happiness that he must feel today at taking his seat in this House. I am sure he will find the work very, very interesting, and I know that his colleagues on all sides of the House will be very helpful in making him feel comfortable as he joins among us to solve the many problems of Ontario that we face as a result of some of the mistakes being made across the aisle.

**Mr. B. Rae:** For obvious reasons, I was waiting for the government House leader to accept the responsibility that comes with having lost yet another by-election and accept the presence in our place of a new member.

I do want to say to Mr. Swart that we are delighted to see him here again today. He is welcome every day and any day in this place. I know that thought is shared by all of us here.

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I also want to say to my newly elected colleague the member for Welland-Thorold—Just how I told the Speaker that I had the honour. I did not say as well how relieved I was to see the member here. I think members here know me well enough to realize that was my primary

feeling on election night, and I might say that this thought is shared by all the members of our caucus, every single member.

I just want to say to the member for Welland-Thorold how delighted we are to have him here and to know that the qualities which led to his election despite a very difficult campaign are qualities which will stand him in good stead in this somewhat crazy place.

**An hon. member:** Somewhat?

**Mr. B. Rae:** Somewhat? I just want to wish him the very best and to say that he will, I am sure, very quickly—I would suspect even from today—learn how difficult it is to get answers from the government, but also what joy there is in the good fight, which the member has already fought on behalf of the people of Welland-Thorold, and I know he will be continuing that fight for many, many, many years to come.

**Mr. Speaker:** The member for Welland-Thorold may wish to respond.

**Mr. Kormos:** I would be pleased, Mr. Speaker. I am so very thankful to the honourable members and to my leader for their kind comments. I look forward to the same goodwill being expressed in the months and years to come. I anticipate it.

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. I am sure all members would want to set a good example today for our new member.

#### VISITOR

**Mr. Speaker:** I ask all members of the assembly to recognize in the Speaker's gallery a member of the German National Parliament of the Federal Republic of Germany, Mrs. Leni Fischer. Please join me in welcoming Mrs. Fischer.

**Mr. R. F. Johnston:** I would like to ask unanimous consent of the House to make some comments about the passing of a servant of this Legislature.

**Mr. Speaker:** Unanimous agreement?

Agreed to.

#### ANDREW RICHARDSON

**Mr. R. F. Johnston:** It is not often, as I understand it, that we do note the passing of servants of the Legislature, but for those of us who have been here for some years, the passing of Andy Richardson, a clerk of this House, on the weekend was a very sad event. Andy was a very courageous man who fought cancer very hard over the last number of years. As his obituary in



the paper says, he was "a lion to the end." He was also a very flamboyant clerk, who set a standard of flamboyancy that has been hard to measure up to, as I am sure the members of the table will attest.

He was a great friend whom many of us got to know well on committee and travelling over the years. Speaking personally, while he was in Sunnybrook Medical Centre fighting cancer at the beginning of the onslaught of the disease, I was admitted with my heart problems; and although he was suffering a great deal, he came down and visited me in my room and I was very grateful for this. I think it speaks to the kind of bond that can develop between servants of the House and those of us who are chosen to represent the people.

**Mr. J. M. Johnson:** On behalf of my party, I too would like to extend our sincerest condolences to Andy's wife and his family. In the obituary it says of Andy Richardson, "Retired Queen's Park Legislature. Proud like a lion to the end, Andrew met with dignity his final challenge, at his home." That was Andy: a lion to be proud of.

I had the opportunity to meet him for the first time 13 years ago, when I was elected to this Legislature. I was very fortunate to be appointed by the powers that be to serve on the standing committee on resources development, and Andrew was the clerk of that resources committee. He taught me everything I know about committee work, especially travelling committees, and for that I owe him a lot.

Andy was one of the finer clerks of the House. Many of the clerks today have followed his example, I am very pleased to say. I do think Andy was, as the member for Scarborough West (Mr. R. F. Johnston) mentioned, not only a servant of the House, but also a servant of the people and a good friend of the members of this Legislature. On behalf of our party, I extend to his family our very sincere condolences.

**Hon. Mr. Conway:** I would like to join my colleagues the member for Wellington (Mr. J. M. Johnson) and the member for Scarborough West in paying our respects to the late Andy Richardson, who I remember very well in many of the same ways which have been noted by the previous speakers. I will always remember Andy for his wonderful Irish charm, that verve and style. He was just an absolutely delightful guy with whom to work. I can think of a number of occasions when, like the member for Wellington, I was on a committee travelling, as well as here in the Legislature, with Andy. He was

extremely patient, always helpful, almost always entertaining.

What I will always remember about Andy as one of the servants of this assembly is that he was a great friend, a very loyal servant of the assembly, and just a great guy to be with, either at work or after work, where he could tell a story perhaps better than anyone around here. To his family, I want on behalf of the government to extend our condolences on this, the occasion of his passing.

**Mr. Speaker:** As soon as the official record of the House, Hansard, is printed, I will of course send a copy to the Richardson family so that your words of sympathy are conveyed to them.

## STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY

### PATIENTS ON LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR'S WARRANTS

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** I wish to inform the House that today I am tabling the report on risk management assessment for patients on warrants of the Lieutenant Governor, an inquiry I requested in May.

As members will recall, this investigation was initiated following an incident in London involving two patients from St. Thomas Psychiatric Hospital. At that time, I directed our psychiatric hospitals branch to commission an independent assessment of risk management systems for patients on warrants of the Lieutenant Governor in provincial psychiatric hospitals.

The assessment was conducted by ENCON Insurance Managers Inc. They were asked to assess the policies and procedures in place to manage patients on loosened warrants; to provide us with a complete picture of current systems, including strengths and weaknesses; and to make recommendations for any improvement.

My ministry has now received the report and staff has had an opportunity to study its 11 recommendations.

I support the general principles outlined in the report. We will be taking immediate action to implement the report's last six recommendations, which deal with policies and procedures to strengthen the existing system. Included are recommendations for system-wide procedures for the release of information on LGW patients to the police, employers and halfway houses, and a clear system for authorizing levels of privilege for patients.

I have directed our psychiatric hospitals branch to take immediate action to establish these procedures and to ensure that psychiatric hospital



staff is provided with educational sessions on the new procedures.

In addition, I have requested ministry staff to begin immediately, with four other ministries, to plan a co-ordinated approach to the management of forensic patients, including LGWs, in reference to the first five recommendations.

This action will be taken in conjunction with the ministries of the Attorney General, Solicitor General, Community and Social Services and Correctional Services. Steps are already under way to establish a working group and the first meeting will take place shortly.

As I previously stated, the Lieutenant Governor's Board of Review, established under the federal Criminal Code, is responsible for reviewing cases of patients on warrants. The system of managing individuals under the Lieutenant Governor's warrant has been in place for many years and falls within federal jurisdiction. Patients on warrant have been found by the courts to be either unfit to stand trial or not guilty by reason of insanity. They have entered the psychiatric system via the legal process.

#### 1400

While the conditions of warrants are defined by the Lieutenant Governor's Board of Review, administrators of psychiatric hospitals have some discretionary authority in determining the level of privileges granted to patients on warrants. It is in these discretionary areas that our risk management system will be strengthened.

Our goal is to ensure that we have the best possible monitoring system in place in our psychiatric hospitals.

Further, I want to assure the House and the people of Ontario that as we develop these systems to better co-ordinate the warrant system, public safety will be our foremost consideration. Our goal is to ensure public safety while providing appropriate treatment programs for patients.

#### EPILEPSY AWARENESS MONTH

**Hon. Mr. Mancini:** I would like to take this opportunity to reinforce the importance of November as Epilepsy Awareness Month.

As the Minister responsible for disabled persons, I share the concern as expressed earlier this month by my colleague the member for Nickel Belt (Mr. Laughren). Unless there is greater public awareness of the real facts about epilepsy, far too many Ontarians will continue to face unjust discrimination. The member for Nickel Belt and I have a particularly acute sense of this, since both of us have epilepsy ourselves.

Epilepsy is a medical condition which anyone can develop at any time. Epilepsy Ontario estimates that about one in every 100 people has some form of epilepsy. These days, about 50 per cent of persons with epilepsy have the condition totally under control with medication and another 30 per cent achieve good results through medication, although all are not entirely free of seizures.

Despite these encouraging statistics, however, fear, superstition and outmoded attitudes still tend to create attitudinal barriers for persons who have epilepsy. Families, friends and employers often still do not realize that someone with epilepsy can live exactly the way anyone else does.

Through the Office for Disabled Persons, financial assistance has been provided to Epilepsy Ontario by several community action fund grants. A grant for \$8,000 paid for the production of general information pamphlets in five languages for community outreach, and about \$27,000 to Epilepsy Ontario is paying for the updating and extensive distribution of an educational pamphlet.

At the same time, however, we need increased public co-operation, and I urge every member today to try, whenever possible, to spread the word that epilepsy is just a medical condition and nothing more.

#### RESPONSES

##### EPILEPSY AWARENESS MONTH

**Mr. Laughren:** I want to commend the minister for his comments on November being Epilepsy Awareness Month, although I do think it would have been more appropriate to have had some consultation with me before he made his statement.

I must say that I agree with him in his assessment of epilepsy as a disorder. It is often said by people who have experienced this particular disorder that the reaction of other people to people who have epilepsy is greater than the effects of the disorder itself, and I think that truly is a fact.

I would have been happier if the minister had stood in his place and indicated that he intended to fund the launching of epilepsy chapters across Ontario. I happen to be on the executive, and I am proud to be on the executive, of the board of Epilepsy Sudbury. We are struggling to get off the ground, if you will, as an organization, almost totally to educate the community, not so much to provide services to epileptics, but rather to educate the population as to just what kind of



disorder epilepsy is and how it can be treated in a very public way and talked about in a very public way.

For that, I commend the minister for his statement and drawing to the attention of the people of Ontario that November is Epilepsy Awareness Month.

#### PATIENTS ON LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR'S WARRANTS

**Mr. Reville:** I want to respond to the statement by the Minister of Health in respect of risk management systems. While I welcome the tone the minister takes in this regard, I find it amazing that the ENCON Insurance Managers should have discovered that our systems for dealing with information about the 400 people who are on warrants of the Lieutenant Governor are so poor that in fact the 10 provincial psychiatric hospitals appear to have developed almost no systems to deal with some of their clients.

It is amazing to me to find out that the minister is suggesting setting up one of these interministerial task forces which will begin to plan a co-ordinated approach. It could very much end up like the Fram report which was four or five years in the making. One would expect that a more lofty goal than ensuring the best possible monitoring system would be to ensure that we have the best possible treatment in place in the province, which of course is not at all the case.

In 1985, the government tabled the Hucker report which had some very far-reaching suggestions to make about the facility at Oak Ridge at the Penetanguishene Mental Health Centre. Most of those recommendations have not been implemented and I think the government is to be criticized very strongly for the lack of urgency with which it is approaching this very difficult juncture of the justice system and the health care system.

**Mrs. Cunningham:** I would like to speak to the risk management system report that was tabled in the House today and I look forward to further looking at the report in detail. I am very pleased with the report. I thank the minister for coming forth with it just a month after our most recent question.

I guess my urging today would be that although the minister is taking immediate action on the first six recommendations, I would hope that as soon as possible she would work very quickly with her small working group on the last five recommendations.

I underline the minister's goal and I share my confidence in it, and that is, not only are we concerned about public safety, we are just as concerned about treatment programs for the patients in the hospitals.

**Mr. Runciman:** I do not believe the risk management report adequately answers some of the concerns that were raised about the London issue. I know when we talked about this initially in the House, the minister had an internal study conducted by the administration at the hospital and they gave themselves a clean bill of health. Then she established this committee which has not really addressed the London situation, so we really do not know what happened in terms of a breakdown in the system in London and really caused that terrible result. The minister has not addressed that. No heads are rolling as a result and we have this report which she suggests she is going to take some action on.

There is a comment in here in response to maximum security and I quote, "There has been a determined attempt by the ministry to reduce the number of patients in maximum security." That is indeed accurate. They have been shoving these people into medium security facilities that the report quite clearly indicates are not adequate to handle this kind of an individual. The staff are not trained. They are underpaid in comparison to those at Penetanguishene and they have to address that particular concern and supply, construct, whatever they have to do, so that we have additional maximum security forensic facilities in this province.

They also talk about the shortage of forensic psychiatrists and the minister has not commented on that particular recommendation, but knowing members who serve on review boards I want to say that this is a particular concern. They do not have the kind of expertise to draw on that is really necessary and they are the people who are making the decisions to release these individuals into our communities. They do not have the kind of professional expertise at their beck and call that they require. I hope the minister addresses that rather soon.

We are talking about public safety here. Recommendation 7: "That a system-wide procedure be developed for release of information to employers or operators." That is fine. What about employees as well? We have had instances in my own community where young teenage girls are working with individuals who have committed serious sexual crimes. These individuals are working with them and are not made aware of the person's record, their parents are not aware and



there is no obligation upon the employer to inform them. In fact, the employer is restricted from doing so.

Those kinds of questions have to be addressed as well. We are talking about public safety and the minister up to this point has not dealt with it adequately.

1410

#### EPILEPSY AWARENESS MONTH

**Mrs. Marland:** The gravity of the medical condition known as epilepsy is well demonstrated by the fact that Epilepsy Awareness Month is organized on a national basis.

In our Progressive Conservative caucus, we certainly join with epilepsy associations around this province and with the thousands of Ontarians who suffer this disorder in marking Epilepsy Awareness Month. It is very true that we have to do a better job of educating the public to recognize not only epilepsy, but also the fact that those who suffer from it can live perfectly normal lives.

The sadness about any of these conditions, however, as the minister commented, is based on fear, superstition and outmoded attitudes that still tend to create attitudinal barriers for persons who have epilepsy. It is never the disability associated with a condition that is the greatest hardship for those people who have those conditions, but rather the perception of the public, particularly future employers. We see this with all disabilities, and we hope we can all play a role in educating the public to the future benefit of those people.

#### ORAL QUESTIONS

##### CHILD CARE

**Mr. B. Rae:** I have some questions today for the Minister of Community and Social Services. The child care mess has now reached the point where not only do we have literally thousands of people who are on waiting lists, but we understand there is also a continuing battle over the very nature of the so-called federal plan, which has the support of the provincial government.

I wonder if the minister can tell us why, even at this late stage, he would not simply indicate to the federal government that Ontario has no intention of participating in a plan that will restrict the number of child care spaces, that Ontario wants to continue with the Canada assistance plan and that this is the way for Ontario to move to ensure that all those families

that need it in this province will have a guarantee of access to child care today.

**Hon. Mr. Sweeney:** As the honourable leader well knows, the existing federal legislation is now defunct and we have no way of knowing which government is going to be in charge in Ottawa and whether legislation looking like that will be brought back or not, so we just have no way of responding to that.

However, let me go back to the previous legislation, which I assume the honourable leader was referring to. We had indicated from Ontario's perspective that there were some very obvious advantages to us under this new legislation compared to the process under CAP.

One was that we would get 50 per cent cost-sharing instead of 38 per cent cost-sharing as we are presently getting under CAP. The second one was that it allowed us to be more flexible in the kinds of services we wanted to deliver. The third one was that over the seven-year period of the plan, Ontario would actually get in total dollars more money than it would under CAP. So these were the advantages.

We also, however, drew to the attention of the federal government—this recent media exposé of these concerns was shared by Ontario; our senior staff were involved in that process—some of the difficulties—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. Perhaps the minister may wait for a further supplementary.

**Mr. B. Rae:** The minister cannot have it both ways. The fact of the matter is that in this province it is the government of Ontario that is now restricting access to child care spaces under the Canada assistance plan. It is the government of Ontario that is restricting that access, not the government of Canada; nobody else but the minister.

Is the minister saying he shares the view of the report contained in the *Globe and Mail* today that the new federal plan has an "approach to funding that is restrictive; rigid parameters are set; the federal government is intruding into provincial jurisdiction; there is no protection against inflation; there is no assurance costs will be fully shared after 1995"?

If that in fact is the view of the government of Ontario, surely the question obviously is, why does the minister not simply say that this plan will not work, that the government of Ontario will continue to fund under the Canada assistance plan and that the wealthiest province in Confederation will agree to its assured share in making sure that every child who needs a space in Ontario gets a space, which is not the case today?



**Hon. Mr. Sweeney:** When any provincial jurisdiction in Canada triples the amount of money it spends on day care, doubles the number of subsidized spaces for day care and increases by 25 per cent the licensed spaces for day care, I hardly think it is proper to say it is restricting access to day care in that province. We have done more than any other province in Canada.

Second, I had already indicated to the honourable member, because I understood his original question to refer to our acceptance or lack of acceptance of the federal plan, that I had been in personal consultation with the federal minister, the Honourable Jake Epp, at least at that time, and indicated the conditions that would be necessary for Ontario to buy into that plan. It did include a greater degree of flexibility with respect to the cash flow of dollars than what that particular report in the *Globe and Mail* refers to.

We have clearly said that if those conditions are not met for Ontario, we will have to re-examine our position as to whether or not we are prepared to sign it, but at the present time there is nothing to sign.

**Mr. B. Rae:** The minister will know full well that the problem in this province today is that somewhere between 7,000 and 10,000 people across the province are on a waiting list and this province has refused to meet that growing demand in terms of that waiting list. Those facts are absolutely undeniable. We can bring families and parents and kids down here every day of the week if that is what it will take to convince the minister that there is a problem, a need that is far in excess of what this government has been prepared to do.

Whatever form the government may take on November 21, Ontario has an obligation to meet the needs of the citizens of Ontario. My simple question to the minister is, why not simply say that it is no go with respect to any federal plan that restricts access to space, that Ontario will meet its needs under the Canada assistance plan and that any future legislation has to allow Ontario to meet all of the needs of every single person now on the waiting list?

**Mr. Speaker:** Minister.

**Mr. B. Rae:** Every kid who is waiting for a space deserves a space in Ontario.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. B. Rae:** Why can the minister not meet that criterion?

**Hon. Mr. Sweeney:** The honourable member is correct when he says there are waiting lists for day care, but he would be equally correct if he

said there are waiting lists for services to the elderly, waiting lists for services to the disabled and waiting lists with respect to family violence. There are waiting lists in all of the services we offer. My responsibility as the Minister for Community and Social Services is to see to it that the total number of dollars and resources allocated are spread over all those services, not to any one of them.

I think the honourable Leader of the Opposition also has to reconsider his comments when he is the very same leader who says to the Treasurer (Mr. R. F. Nixon) of this province, "You've whacked the people of the province with tax increases;" says to the Treasurer, "You're driving this province into debt with your big deficit;" and says to the Treasurer, "Spend more money on health, spend more money on education, spend more money on the environment and spend more money on roads." Let's be a little reasonable.

1420

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. New question, the Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. B. Rae:** I want to go back to the minister. He has now admitted that there are waiting lists and delays for everything for which he is responsible. I am glad that after all this time in office the minister has finally woken up to his failure and the government's failure to deal with those waiting lists. That is the issue.

#### SOCIAL ASSISTANCE REVIEW BOARD

**Mr. B. Rae:** I would like to deal now with another abject failure of this government, and that is the incredible delays, the extraordinary delays, that are in place at the Social Assistance Review Board.

It is estimated that the turnaround time for cases at the Social Assistance Review Board, the time it takes for the board to make up its mind, varies somewhere between six months and a year.

**Hon. Mr. Scott:** Ross McClellan for chairman. Your old House leader is running it. He's doing a good job.

**Mr. B. Rae:** The Attorney General (Mr. Scott) may feel that a delay of a year for somebody on welfare is acceptable, but for us justice delayed is justice denied, whether one is in the court system or the welfare system, and we do not accept that for a moment.

I would like to ask the minister if he can just tell us clearly and categorically why it is that



people who are appealing benefits that have been denied them, who have been granted benefits by the Social Assistance Review Board—the board is asked by his own ministry to review those cases and those cases are taken to the Divisional Court by his own ministry. Can the minister tell us why those people should be denied benefits while they wait for justice to be done in their cases?

**Hon. Mr. Sweeney:** I point out to the honourable leader that the complete restructuring of the Social Assistance Review Board under this government has been done in a way that very closely parallels that which was suggested or recommended by his former critic for the Ministry of Community and Social Services. I think the honourable member will recognize that fact.

We now have 18 full-time people on that board. We now have two- and three-person hearings. We now have a chairman of that board who is recognized, I believe, even by members of the New Democratic caucus, as being very efficient and very sensitive to the needs of the people that board serves.

Speaking to the specific comment the honourable leader made, the board itself has the prerogative to see to it that while the process is under way, individuals who need assistance in fact get that interim assistance.

**Mr. B. Rae:** I do not think a six- or eight-month waiting period, which is now the turnaround time for an appeal to the board, is acceptable, and I hope the minister would agree with me that it is not acceptable.

If he wants evidence of how long it takes, I was talking to a member of the board who says he signed a decision yesterday that was dated April 25. That is precisely the problem that is taking place at the board today. I am not talking about before or any other time; I am talking about what is happening at the board right now.

I wonder if the minister can explain why it is that between April 1 and October 31 of this year, one third of the appeals of Social Assistance Review Board decisions going to Divisional Court were taken at the behest of the Ministry of Community and Social Services. If the minister is really interested in expanding the system and making sure it is more generous, if he wants to anticipate everything Mr. Thomson has said about the turnaround time, which should be 15 days, can he say why he is now responsible for one third of the appeals at SARB that are going to the Divisional Court?

**Hon. Mr. Sweeney:** I will most certainly concur with the honourable member that a

six-month waiting list is not acceptable. I would share with the honourable member a recent discussion with the chairman of the board, that she is working very strenuously to get that down to a much shorter period of time. The chairman of the board has indicated to me that it is her goal to get that down to a month or slightly more than a month.

The Leader of the Opposition will recognize that with the significant number of new members on the board and the clear indication that those board members have to be better trained and have to have better resources available to them, there is some difficulty in this turnaround. That is what is happening right now. That will not continue.

With respect to the appeals, let me share with the honourable member that when I became minister, the number of decisions of the Social Assistance Review Board that went in favour of the recipient was in the neighbourhood of 15 per cent. Eighty-five per cent of the decisions were against the recipient. The percentage of decisions going in favour of the recipient today is between 60 per cent and 70 per cent. That is a very significant turnaround, but as part of that process decisions are being made that in the judgement of the ministry are not in line with the legislation backing up those decisions. When that happens, the ministry has an obligation and a duty to—

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you.

**Mr. R. F. Johnston:** It was on October 28, 1983, that I first raised the issue of these five- and six-month waiting lists. At that time, we had a regressive board and a regressive minister. It would appear now that the board is more progressive in its decisions, but the ministry is just as regressive as it has ever been.

I have five cases here coming out of my office and the legal centre in my riding. The average is five-and-a-half months, over 150 days, for a decision, which the laws of this government say should be done within 40 days—by the law, by the regulation. These are the weakest, poorest people in our society who are having to wait longer for decisions by this board than for any other decision by any board in the province.

**Mr. Speaker:** Question?

**Mr. R. F. Johnston:** Is that acceptable to the minister and what is he doing now, five years later and three years into his mandate, to change it?

**Hon. Mr. Sweeney:** The honourable member for Scarborough West will well recall that part of his recommendation was that we have full-time instead of part-time members, that they be well



trained, that we have a new chairman, that there be legal assistance available to the board and that there be other support services available to the board.

All of those things have been done; every single one of those recommendations. I will admit for the second time in this question period that the period of time the member referred to is not appropriate, is not acceptable and does not meet the regulations, but the honourable member surely will recognize that in order to do all of those things—and we are not going back three-and-a-half years of my position as minister; we are only going back a year and a half when we made those significant changes to this board. The last six full-time people have only been brought on the board within the last three or four months; that is the longer time.

In all fairness to the chairman, the members and the backup staff, who are doing a formidable job and a very significant job, I think they will turn that around, but they need a little time to do it.

#### YOUNG OFFENDER

**Mr. Brandt:** My question is to the Minister of Community and Social Services as well and it relates to the information that was released today in regard to the young offender who was convicted of killing the Irwin family in Scarborough and who is now apparently out on unescorted day passes.

We agree with the minister that the need for rehabilitation and assistance of a youth like this, who requires this kind of an entry back into society, is perhaps necessary and may well work on behalf of the youth to assist him in getting reacclimatized to the society he wants to re-enter. At the same time, we do raise a very serious question with respect to the position being taken by the police, where they indicate that they have no knowledge whatever of the day passes that have been given to this particular youth since he has been allowed relief from the Syl Apps Youth Centre.

Can the minister indicate to us and to the members of this House why the police were not informed in this particular instance as to the circumstances surrounding the youth in question?

**Hon. Mr. Sweeney:** There were two elements in the honourable member's question. Let me deal with both of them.

The first one deals with a comment that the honourable member himself made in an open letter to me, and I presume to whomever else was

interested in it, as to what procedures we have in place to assist the young person to reintegrate himself—I believe that was the word the member used—back into society rather than just waiting till the final release point, dropping him off and then doing nothing about it.

**1430**

There is a protocol in place and the honourable leader touched on some of those points. The first one is a period of escorted day passes to a place of employment. That period has gone through. The second stage is unescorted but supervised day passes to a place of employment, supervised with respect to time. That means that the time the young person leaves the Syl Apps Youth Centre and the time it takes for him to get to the place of employment are very carefully monitored. If he or she, as the case may be, is five or 10 minutes late, then there is action taken immediately. While it is unescorted, it is not unsupervised.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you.

**Hon. Mr. Sweeney:** The third one, of course, is the actual release. With respect to the police—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. I appreciate the length and the quality of the answer, but there are other members who wish to ask questions some time during this hour. Supplementary.

**Mr. Brandt:** My supplementary will give the minister an opportunity to expand on his answer with respect to the role of the police in this particular instance.

This is a very serious case, as the minister is well aware. There were three individuals in the Irwin family who were killed, as the minister is also well aware. The safety of the public, as well as the rehabilitation of the individual in question, who is now being released from the Syl Apps centre, are of paramount concern, I think, to the public at large.

Will the minister indicate specifically in response to my question what role the police have in regard to this youth, in order to answer the legitimate concerns being raised by the public? Will the minister indicate if in other cases this particular situation we are dealing with here has been handled in any different fashion or any fashion other than the way in which this youth is being handled?

**Hon. Mr. Sweeney:** Let me begin by saying that the Halton Regional Police Force has been most supportive. The protocol I described before, or was attempting to finish describing, also includes a requirement that the local police force be notified when these day passes are being issued to a young offender who has a record



similar to that of the young man we are talking about.

There was a definite lapse at Syl Apps. Therefore I, as minister, accept responsibility for that, the police not being notified in this situation. As a matter of fact, my understanding is that in previous cases the Halton police force has been notified in these kinds of situations. This was a definite lapse in this one case. I am not aware—and I asked, for the honourable member's information—I am not aware that this type of lapse has occurred previously, at least not during my term as minister, but I cannot guarantee that absolutely.

I want to say that the police have been very co-operative, and the protocol is that they would be notified right away. Going back to my previous answer, when I talk about supervision, part of the supervision is that if in fact the young person is five or 10 minutes late getting to the other location, then the police are notified immediately. The police in the past have always been extremely co-operative, and I want to take this opportunity to thank the Halton police force publicly for its co-operation and to say I regret the lapse in this situation.

**Mr. Brandt:** It is interesting that the minister should make those comments, because although he may say that the Halton police have been co-operative in this particular case, the reality is that their response to him is that they are frustrated by the lack of information as it relates to this case and have publicly indicated so to the minister and, I believe, to the public at large.

Will the minister assure this House that he is providing all the information that is normally the case with respect to circumstances of this kind to the Halton police force and that the public interest with respect to safety is paramount in the minister's mind, as well as that of the local police force? Is all of this information being provided to them in an adequate fashion now? I want to be absolutely certain that is the case, because this is a very serious matter.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you.

**Mr. Brandt:** There has been some suggestion of mishandling in the past.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. The question has been asked.

**Hon. Mr. Sweeney:** I believe that in my previous answer I indicated that was part of the procedural protocol in dealing with matters of this kind. In this particular case there was a lapse, yes. The individual staff person who was responsible for that lapse has certainly been made

aware of the fact that it ought not to have happened and should not happen again.

The administrative director of the Syl Apps Youth Centre has invited representatives of the police to come in and meet with her personally—I believe the meeting is tomorrow morning; it may have been later today—to see to it that the local police have all the information which is available.

One of the small difficulties we have in situations like this is the requirement under the young offenders legislation not to make the young offender's name known publicly. We are trying to work out, and continue to try to work out, protocols with local police forces, because we do require and we do appreciate their co-operation to get around that particular matter in the legislation. We believe we have the process to do that.

In this particular situation, in response to the direct question of the honourable member, yes, the Halton police force has been invited into Syl Apps to receive all the information we have with respect to this particular young offender.

#### ONTARIO FARM-START

**Mr. Villeneuve:** My question is to the Minister of Agriculture and Food. Last month I asked the minister about the failure of his five-year Ontario Farm-Start program. He would not consider an extension of the program. He would not give any assurance that he would even review the financial needs of the farming community.

I am going to give him a second chance to redeem himself. Will he review the Farm-Start program, admit that his forecasts were wrong and provide enough funding to the Farm-Start program to help all eligible young farmers start up, as he originally intended this program to do?

**Hon. Mr. Riddell:** We continually review our programs. We are reviewing all our programs right now and establishing priorities for those programs that will fit in with the next budget that comes down next spring.

The honourable member knows this was a \$90-million program based on the past history of new entrants into agriculture. We planned to help about 2,300 farmers come into farming for the first time.

The program, by the way, runs over seven years. It is not just a five-year program; this program runs over seven years. A \$38,000 grant goes to each farmer whose application is accepted. It runs over a period of seven years, but the fact of the matter is that after the program was



announced, within about the first six or seven months we received 3,300 applications. That shows the success of this program. We expected 2,300.

**Mr. Villeneuve:** In the minister's own brochure it says starting on January 1, a \$90-million program lasting five years. That says it all: a seven-year program but supposedly lasting five years. What do I tell some of the young farmers who were planning to go into farming using Farm-Start? Some of them are still at the University of Guelph. Some were actually making very concrete plans to purchase a farm. All of a sudden the window closed on them. Is this his final answer? The minister will not help them?

**Hon. Mr. Riddell:** The honourable member did not understand when I said we continually review our programs. He can tell those young farmers, who maybe have not even sent in an application yet for all I know, that there is an establishment period to this program, and in all likelihood farmers who participated in the three-year establishment program whereby they do not have to buy their farm until the end of the third year may well decide at the end of that time that they do not want to continue with the program; in which case, those other farmers who are on the waiting list will be moved up to fill that position. We are doing very well with the program, thank you very much.

1440

**Mr. Villeneuve:** I am very disappointed at the nonanswer. Three years down the road, if someone else does not fulfil the minister's requirements he is going to maybe help them? That is a great commitment. In Ontario, farmers receive the lowest level of provincial assistance anywhere in this country. In 1985 the Liberals promised to help them through adverse financial times as long as it was necessary.

I have to assume that farming no longer needs any help. The minister has cut the Ontario family farm interest rate reduction program back by 60 per cent; he has cut off Farm-Start. What are we going to tell agriculture regarding what the minister is doing for them?

**Hon. Mr. Riddell:** We certainly do not need to be ashamed about what we, as a Liberal government, have done for the farmers of this province.

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**Hon. Mr. Riddell:** Mr. Speaker, I just want you to hear what the Ontario Federation of Agriculture had to say:

"While many challenges remain, we believe the Premier, the Minister of Agriculture and Food and the cabinet have effectively addressed some of the outstanding concerns of farmers. We want to take this opportunity to express the organization's appreciation for this government's significant contribution in areas such as: free trade agreement...tax equity...agricultural credit...land stewardship...farm safety."

It goes on and on, and they end up saying—  
Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**Hon. Mr. Riddell:** They end up by saying: "These are only the highlights of a ministry and a government which has shown a willingness to tackle the tough problems. We welcome the results to date and we want to see that willingness continued."

How does the member like that?

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

#### VISITORS

**Mr. Speaker:** If I could have the attention of the members for a moment before I recognize the next member for a question, I would ask all members of the assembly to recognize in the Speaker's gallery, from the Legislative Assembly of Nova Scotia: the Minister of Lands and Forests and chairman of the seniors secretariat, the Honourable Jack MacIsaac; the Minister of Community Services and Minister of Consumer Affairs, the Honourable Tom McInnis; and the member for the riding of Dartmouth North, Sandra Jolly.

#### NIAGARA REGIONAL POLICE

**Mr. Kormos:** I have a question of the Solicitor General and it is with respect to the Colter inquiry, which is, we know, the Colter inquiry into the Niagara Regional Police Force, which commenced hearing evidence, finally, yesterday, November 14, notwithstanding that it had been called for a year ago, in November 1987, and that was after some significant pressure being applied.

The inquiry addresses not only local concerns but also more broadly reaching province-wide issues, and its findings will undoubtedly have impact on policing and police forces across the province. The Niagara Regional Board of Police Commissioners is facing costs in the hundreds of thousands of dollars, and this is a financial burden which the regional taxpayer cannot carry, simply cannot pay.



The question is, why will the government not commit itself to accepting its responsibility for payment of the region's legal costs?

**Hon. Mrs. Smith:** On behalf of all the members in the House, first I would like to welcome the member from Welland-Thorold. He comes at an interesting time for his area, and we welcome him here.

The member will be glad to know that we do indeed consider the importance of the work of the commission as it relates to the Welland-Thorold area in the Niagara area in a general sense, and it was at the request of the police commission there that this inquiry was set into motion.

Indeed, the province will be bearing substantial costs, probably in the millions of dollars, with regard to looking into this matter, but accepts its responsibility to do that on behalf of the members of this area and trusts that there will be good results from it. The province is in no way shirking its responsibilities in this area. Rather, we will indeed provide a good and fair commission and hope that the results will provide a perception of fairer policing in the Niagara Peninsula.

**Mr. Kormos:** On October 20, 1988, the chairman, Denise Taylor, wrote to the Premier (Mr. Peterson) requesting this financial assistance. That letter did not receive a response. The chairman wrote again on November 10, 1988, similarly requesting assistance. There has been no response to date. Will the Solicitor General at least agree to sit down and meet with the chairman of the police commission with a view to discussing the matter of funding vis-à-vis the region's costs?

**Hon. Mrs. Smith:** I am always willing to sit down and discuss the matter with anybody. However, the matter has been very fully discussed. I have discussed it with the Premier. We recognize that in this area, as in other areas, there is a particular responsibility by the area and the police commission in that area to accept their share of the responsibility. Indeed, this was a Niagara region problem. We are assisting in it, as requested. We are accepting, on behalf of the taxpayers of Ontario, a large burden of the costs in this.

However, the area directly involved obviously must assume some of the costs. This is reasonable and proper. We will continue to carry our share but consider that the area of Niagara, which is where this problem has arisen and which is where the benefits will be felt, must accept some of the responsibility also.

#### GARBAGE PAIL KIDS STICKERS

**Mr. Runciman:** I have a question for the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations. This is not a new issue for him. He has been contacted by a number of concerned parents with respect to something called Garbage Pail Kids stickers. Many parents, of course, are concerned. They depict horror and cruelty, and parents consider them to be psychologically harmful to the children. I wonder if the minister could advise us what action he has taken to address the concerns of many parents across this province.

**Hon. Mr. Wrye:** In response to the honourable member, he is correct that there have been a number of letters I have received. Certainly a lot of parents are concerned about these stickers. I am advised that my officials, as I remember, looked into this matter and there is no appropriate action one can take as a consumer minister. There is certainly a concern on the part of a number of parents, as I pointed out, but while they are concerned, it appears they would have to take action to ensure that their children not buy these stickers, which I gather are not very acceptable.

**Mr. Runciman:** Life is one dodge after another: cars, taxes and responsibilities. The minister is obviously trying to dodge responsibility here. He talks about being concerned, but his only response to parents has been to suggest that they write to gum manufacturers and hope they will change their policy with respect to these products. I am wondering if the minister can take some action to match his rhetoric in this respect.

He said he has talked to his officials. Why has he not asked them about the possibility of initiating restrictive legislation in this respect? At the very least, rather than fobbing this off to concerned parents, why is he, as a minister of the crown, not sitting down with these gum manufacturers to make sure that action is taken?

**Hon. Mr. Wrye:** Certainly these have extra-provincial implications. I am sure the honourable member would know that. The honourable member acknowledges that we have written back to the parents indicating that action will have to be taken on their part. I guess there comes a point at which a judgement has to be made about whether a government can appropriately become involved in this issue and all others, or whether certainly we should ask corporations to show the kind of corporate responsibility that both the honourable member and I wish that they would show.



Certainly, I share my honourable friend's concern. Through this exchange in the House today, I want to indicate, as well, the concern that I have.

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### SEWAGE TREATMENT

**Mr. Daigeler:** My question is to the Minister of the Environment. Last week I received a letter from the Grenville-Carleton Conservation and Sportsmen's Club. The letter alleges that the town of Merrickville has been dumping sewage into the Rideau River for a number of months. The club also claims that the towns of Smiths Falls and Kemptville are dumping raw sewage directly into the river.

Given the keen interest of the Ottawa-Carleton MPPs in the quality of our rivers, may I ask the minister whether his ministry is aware of these allegations. If so, what has been its response and its action?

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** I want to thank the member for bringing these concerns to my attention. He indicated to me today that he would be doing so.

**Mr. Brandt:** You mean he advised you in advance?

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** If only the opposition from the New Democratic Party and the Conservatives would do the same, the quality of answers would be enhanced and the answers shorter.

I have asked my ministry staff to look into these matters as a result of receiving this communication. I understand that the sewage treatment plants in Merrickville, Kemptville and Smiths Falls do occasionally have overflows to the Rideau River during heavy rainfall events. As we know, many municipalities in the province do. That is why we have a program to increase the capacity of those sewage treatment plants on an ongoing basis.

Merrickville is requesting assistance for a needs study on sewer rehabilitation. The members are aware of the LifeLines program. That is a program that will address that.

My ministry has imposed a development freeze on Kemptville until it upgrades its sewage treatment plant. The municipality has been notified that it is in violation of ministry effluent discharge criteria for the existing plant. The town, in fact, has identified a course of action to correct this.

Smiths Falls is planning to upgrade its sewage treatment plant and is in the process of separating some of its sewers in the old part of the town. As

well, the town is conducting a needs study on its sewer system.

**Mr. Daigeler:** Given the seriousness of this matter, and I think all the members of this House are interested in the protection of our environment, I do hope that the ministry will aggressively continue to look at this matter and provide the necessary funding that will hopefully eliminate these overflows.

As a supplementary, I would like to ask the minister about the situation of the Rideau River in the Ottawa area generally. As he probably knows, there are several beaches that have been closed for many years. I would like to ask the minister how his ministry is working with the regional municipality of Ottawa-Carleton to solve these problems in which there is great interest in my area.

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** There are some encouraging signs in Ottawa-Carleton. Despite the protestations of at least one of the members down there, there are some encouraging signs of some activity that is taking place in Ottawa-Carleton to address this.

Until recently, my ministry has been encouraging the region to support and implement the recommendations of the Rideau River storm water management study which was completed in 1983. All new developments in the Rideau River system are required to provide storm water management facilities. That is a positive change because there are over 20 treatment facilities in the region.

In June 1988, the regional municipality of Ottawa-Carleton set up a committee on beach pollution. The mission of the committee is to have the pollution eliminated from the beaches in a very short period of time. The ministry staff are acting as ongoing resource persons to the committee. The first committee meeting was held, in fact, just last month. The local staff will assist the committee in securing funding for studies and remedial projects.

The municipal-industrial strategy for abatement program, of course, will address preventing upstream municipal industrial pollution. In other words, we have the staff resources devoted to this, we have the financial resources devoted to this and we have the will to undertake these.

### CAMBRIDGE MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

**Mr. Farnan:** I have a question to the Minister of Health. In the Liberal budget squeeze on the Cambridge Memorial Hospital, the minister has forced the closure of the laboratory outpatient services. Those services must now be sought at



private clinics that will charge their services to the Ontario health insurance plan. This transfer of services is merely cosmetic, to reduce the Cambridge Memorial Hospital budget. However, it is a move that promises no savings to the taxpayer or the government and constitutes a reduction of the level of service. Will the minister reject the proposal to cut the laboratory outpatient services included in the Cambridge Memorial Hospital recovery plan and will the minister direct the board of Cambridge Memorial Hospital to immediately reinstate these services?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** I want to acknowledge a letter I have received from the member opposite and his acknowledgement as well that in fact there are a number of hospitals across the province that the ministry has been working with, to help them achieve a recovery plan so that they can manage within the resources available to them. We acknowledge that it is extremely important that we all work together, that hospitals not work and plan or start programs independently of government and that in fact we be as fiscally responsible as we possibly can in delivering these services which are so important to our communities. I want to tell him that the Cambridge board has been working co-operatively with the Ontario Hospital Association and the ministry to develop a recovery plan that will ensure that essential services are maintained in that community.

**Mr. Farnan:** The Cambridge hospital submitted the recovery plan in mid-August and the minister has yet to give it an answer whether or not that plan is acceptable. The people of Cambridge have not been told what is in the recovery plan. Both the minister and her ministry are keeping the people of Cambridge in ignorance and making cuts in our community without informing the community.

**Mr. Speaker:** Do you have a question?

**Mr. Farnan:** I have received numerous calls and letters, from patients and doctors, that detail the disruption of care and the reduction of service caused as a result of these cuts. I have organized a public hearing in Cambridge on December 12, 1988, to allow the citizens of Cambridge and the medical professionals to express their views on the forced closure of the laboratory and cuts in patient services. I am inviting the minister as well as the opposition critics.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. Do you have a supplementary?

**Mr. Farnan:** Will the minister today give an assurance to the people of Cambridge that she or

the Deputy Minister of Health will accept my invitation and take advantage of the opportunity to hear at first hand the reaction of the Cambridge community to this reduction in service?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** I think it is important for the member to agree with me that in fact delivery of health services in this province is not a partisan issue, that in fact every region of this province—

**Mr. Farnan:** Tell the people of Cambridge whether or not you are going to the meeting. You have not answered my question. Why don't you answer about the plan? Is it acceptable?

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. Would the member for Cambridge take his seat? I would remind the member for Cambridge of standing order 24(b): no member shall interrupt another member. Minister.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** I think it is important for the member opposite to acknowledge that in fact the budget of the Cambridge hospital has increased every year, that we are working co-operatively with the hospital, with the assistance of the Ontario Hospital Association.

1500

**Mr. Farnan:** The Liberals are taking services away from Cambridge.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. The member is not interested in a response. New question, the member for Simcoe West.

#### ASSISTIVE DEVICES PROGRAM

**Mr. McCague:** To the Minister of Health: On August 31 of last year, the Premier (Mr. Peterson) promised to extend the assistive devices program to include those requiring hearing aids, by the end of this year. Would the minister, given that there are only six weeks left, tell us when she is going to fulfil this election promise?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** In fact, I am proud to say that our government has expanded the assistive devices program to cover a number of assistive devices for residents in this province. In fact, the program is experiencing some growing pains. I have been meeting with the Assistive Devices Advisory Committee and am hopeful that we will be able to continue to make the kind of progress in the future that we have in the past three years.

**Mr. McCague:** Pardon?

That is of little consolation to the people who, because the Premier made a promise to have the program in place by the end of 1988, are waiting to purchase their hearing aids until the program is introduced. Would the minister, given that I have given her a direct question and a direct supple-



mentary, tell us when she is going to extend this program to include hearing aids.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** I am very aware of this particular issue. I know there are a number of people who have been giving information. Anyone who is specifically interested in the plans and proposals should communicate directly with the ministry.

As I have said, the program is experiencing some growing pains because of our desire to expand this. I have been advised by the advisory committee that what we should be doing is making sure that, as we implement this, we perhaps go a little slower and do it right, rather than go a little faster and do it wrong. We want to make sure that people have the assistive devices that they need in a timely manner. We also want to make sure that we implement this program in such a way that we are not only responding to the quality assurance needs, but also to the needs of the ministry and of the government to ensure that we do so in a fiscally responsible manner.

#### GASOLINE PRICES

**Mr. Owen:** I have a question for the Treasurer and it is a question which I have asked in this House before. It deals with the continuing decline in the world oil price and it appears to be mainly caused by overproduction by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries. This decline has been going on now for some time. It is not new, and yet the consumers at the pumps do not seem to see any reflection of this decline.

My question to the minister is: Can his ministry alone, or with his federal counterparts, try to determine whether this continuing decline can be reflected at the pumps for the basis and benefit of the consumers of this province?

**Hon. R. F. Nixon:** I thank the honourable member for giving notice of the question, and I want to tell him and the members of the House that year over year, the decline in crude prices has been about 15.5 per cent. The honourable members may examine for themselves what the decline, if any, has been in the price, where they buy their gasoline regularly. At Earl's Shell Service the price this morning was about 43 cents a litre. It does not quite reflect, on behalf of Shell Canada oil company in this instance, a 15 per cent decline from a year ago, but it appears that competition works in the market here.

**Mr. Owen:** I know that the Treasurer has proven time and again that he is one who respects learning from lessons of the past. In the late 1970s, we saw that the oil prices started to skyrocket, and we then found out that we were

wanting to try to encourage and support the oil producers of this country. Up until that time, we were trying to take the best deal for the benefit of the consumers.

What I want to do is to get some assurance from the Treasurer that we will endeavour to try to benefit from the past and, as the prices are going down, that we will not forget the western producers of this country.

**Hon. R. F. Nixon:** Actually, the former government had something called the national energy program, which was designed to protect the producers and the consumers. If we had a national energy policy, there might have been some additional stability, both in the price at the wellhead and here.

The thing that has distorted these prices more than anything else is that at the same time as this government was leaving the hated ad valorem tax, the government of Canada, since the Conservatives were elected to Ottawa, has increased the federal sales tax by more than 400 per cent. This naturally has an effect on the price of gasoline right across Canada, but particularly here in this consuming province.

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Once again, I would remind the members that there are other members who would like to ask questions.

#### ONTARIO DRUG BENEFIT PLAN

**Mr. Allen:** I want to return with the Minister of Community and Social Services to the case of Sharleen Girouard of Ottawa, whom he will recall was cut off from family benefits, lost her drug card, and now she and her husband face drug costs almost to the extent of their monthly income. He will know that the Social Assistance Review Board has now given a decision in that case and they have refused to reinstate either the benefits or the drug card.

The Girouards are trying to survive on one meal a day. The doctor says that Sharleen's health is significantly deteriorating. They are piling up debt at the rate of more than \$200 a month. Emergency welfare runs out at the end of this month and the alternative of assistive devices still leaves them with 25 per cent costs, which still puts them more than \$200 in debt over a month's costs.

Will the minister consider in this case resorting to an order in council under section 28 of the act in order to provide the Girouards with their physical and medical needs so that Sharleen may begin to get a handle on her health and her life once more?



**Hon. Mr. Sweeney:** I would remind the honourable member that at the present time there is a supplementary benefit being provided for this family from the local municipal welfare service. To the best of my knowledge, that is paying all but \$200 of their costs. It was deemed by the local municipality that the \$200 would fit in with their income program.

I am not aware of the fact—but I will certainly double check it—that the supplementary benefit is going to end. My best information at this point in time is that it will continue as long as the Girouard family needs it.

**Mr. Allen:** The recognized facts of the matter, both in Ottawa and elsewhere, appear to be that they are in fact piling up more than \$200 a month in debt on the basis of an income of \$1,028 per month against drug costs of \$900 and a benefit of \$600, which leaves them in that deficit situation.

The minister has it within his power to act in this situation by order in council. They are at the extent of the benefits possible to them. Is the minister, in his silence and his refusal to act on this, saying to the Girouards—because these are the only two recourses they have—that either they break up their marriage, in which case she goes back on the benefits and gets the drug card; or on the other hand Mr. Girouard goes off his income, goes on to family benefits himself, in which case their benefits plus the drug costs would meet their needs? Which of those courses is the minister recommending?

**Hon. Mr. Sweeney:** I would point out to the honourable member that even if an order in council was requested, the limit of funding through an order in council would not be greater than the amount of funding that is now being provided through the supplementary benefits program of the local municipality, because the same income restrictions and limitations would be taken into consideration. The only time an order in council is permitted is if there is no other source of income, and in this particular case there is an ongoing other source of income.

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. We have finished with that question and response.

1510

#### APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING

**Mrs. Cunningham:** My question is for the Minister of Skills Development—the fast-moving Minister of Skills Development, I might add.

The major findings in a report put forth by the office of the Minister of Skills Development in

June stated that in a total of 159 occupations, employers are finding it difficult to recruit the skilled workers they require, especially in the construction trades. In May of this year, the minister held a joint conference with the Ministry of Housing, called Future Building '88, to encourage Ontario's bright and hopeful young builders of a prosperous future. What specifically has happened since this conference to promote apprenticeship programs in the construction industry and how many programs has the minister targeted for the building trades?

**Hon. Mr. Curling:** As the member knows, we in the government work very collectively in trying to address the problems of the shortage of skilled labour in this province. We collectively worked with the Ministry of Housing in bringing about the Future Building conference, which was a tremendous success in bringing women, especially, into the construction industry.

What have we done so far? While we are trying collectively with our apprenticeship program and our skills training program, we have again found that the federal government, which should work co-operatively with us, has cut back on some of our funds and we, of course, fill that gap.

To develop a training culture, I need the support of my good colleague here, the member for London North (Mrs. Cunningham), and I need the support of the opposition party to have everyone trained so we can address the shortages in the construction industry.

#### PETITIONS

##### CHURCH OF SCIENTOLOGY

**Ms. Poole:** I would like to table a petition with the House, which has been signed by a number of Ontario residents, concerning the Church of Scientology and freedom of religion. Pursuant to the standing orders, I have affixed my signature to the petition.

##### SCHOOL OPENING EXERCISES

**Mr. J. M. Johnson:** I have a petition:

"To the Honourable Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliaments of Canada and Ontario as follows:

"We, the parents and taxpayers in the community of Harriston, Ontario, and the surrounding area, would like to see the Lord's Prayer and scriptural readings reinstated as part of our education system."

This is signed by 288 concerned citizens from Harriston and area. I have signed this petition and support it.



## EXTENDED CARE

**Mr. Villeneuve:** I also have a petition to the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of the province of Ontario, and it reads as follows:

"We believe that all residents of extended care facilities, whether it be a nursing home or a municipal home for the aged, be entitled to equal care and services according to the specific care requirements of each individual.

"Nursing home residents should benefit from the same amount of funding and kinds of services as residents of municipal homes for the aged.

"We urge the Ontario government to reform the extended care system so that it is uniform, fair and equitable, with regard to funding and regulation and so that seniors in all extended care facilities receive the quality of care that they deserve.

"We support Mary Snelgrove, Ena Symons and the Ontario Nursing Home Association, in their legal challenge and their efforts to gain fair and equal treatment for nursing home residents."

This is signed by 25 concerned citizens in Glengarry county, in the villages of Alexandria, Dalkeith, Glen Robertson and North Lancaster. I agree with this petition.

**Mr. Speaker:** Did you sign it?

**Mr. Villeneuve:** It is not signed by myself.

**Mr. Speaker:** You should sign it.

**Mr. Villeneuve:** I will sign it.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILL

MUNICIPAL AND SCHOOL BOARD  
PAYMENTS ADJUSTMENT ACT

Hon. Mr. Ward moved first reading of Bill 186, An Act to provide for the Allocation of Certain Payments or Grants in Lieu of Taxes made by Canada to Municipalities in respect of Lands that are Exempt from Taxation.

Motion agreed to.

**Hon. Mr. Ward:** The bill provides for the allocation of moneys received from Canada, in the form of a payment or grant in lieu of taxes for school purposes by prescribed municipalities where a Canadian Forces base is located, to the school boards that have jurisdiction in those prescribed municipalities.

Pupils who live on a Canadian Forces base in a prescribed municipality will be entitled to attend a school operated by a school board that has jurisdiction in the municipality where the base is located, without the parent or guardian or the

Department of National Defence being required to pay a tuition fee.

The bill is effective from January 1, 1988, so that payments made by Canada in 1988 can be allocated for school board purposes for this year. Payments that were made in 1986 and 1987 are to be adjusted in 1988 between the municipalities and the government of Canada.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

AGRICULTURAL AND HORTICULTURAL  
ORGANIZATIONS ACT

Hon. Mr. Riddell moved second reading of Bill 66, An Act respecting Agricultural and Horticultural Organizations.

**Hon. Mr. Riddell:** I rise to introduce for second reading the Agricultural and Horticultural Organizations Act. This new legislation will streamline and update existing legislation affecting Ontario's agricultural societies, our horticultural societies and provincially based agricultural associations.

The proposed legislation would combine and replace three existing acts. These are the Agricultural Societies Act, the Horticultural Societies Act and the Agricultural Associations Act. It seems particularly appropriate to update this legislation during my ministry's centennial year, since many of these rural organizations predate the establishment of a provincial Department of Agriculture.

For example, the first agricultural society was established at Niagara-on-the-Lake in 1791 and a Toronto agricultural society followed in 1806. There are now 235 such organizations in Ontario responsible for organizing annual fairs and exhibitions throughout the province. Local horticultural societies were established later in the 1800s, with the provincial organizations formed in 1906.

Almost every community in this province has a horticultural society. There are now 260 such organizations encouraging an interest in gardening and in beautification of urban areas. One of the earliest province-wide agricultural associations was the Fruit Growers' Association of Upper Canada, established in 1859. There are now more than 40 such associations, ranging from the Ontario Cattlemen's Association to the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario.

## 1520

Except for minor amendments, the legislation incorporating these organizations is much the same as it was when passed during the first decade of this century. The legislation before the



House will remove outdated, redundant and restricted sections of the existing acts. It will designate corporate status for the affected organizations, define more clearly objectives for agricultural societies and allow for financial assistance programs to be maintained through the regulations.

It goes almost without saying that the more than 500 organizations incorporated under this legislation contribute a great deal to the quality of life in both our rural and urban communities and play a key role in promoting agriculture in our province.

These changes have been made in full consultation with many individual organizations and with the Ontario Association of Agricultural Societies and the Ontario Horticultural Association.

I am sure the honourable members will agree that this legislation meets the present and future needs of Ontario's agricultural and horticultural societies and our provincial agricultural associations. I ask that this House approve second reading of the Agricultural and Horticultural Organizations Act.

**Mr. Wildman:** I rise in support of Bill 66, An Act respecting Agricultural and Horticultural Organizations.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. Are you asking questions and making statements on the minister's statement?

**Mr. Wildman:** Yes. I will be speaking later, but I also want to specifically ask a question. The minister indicated that this act was prepared with full consultation with the organizations affected. I just want to point out to him that when I received this bill way back when, after it was introduced for first reading, I contacted the horticultural organizations and the fair organizations in my constituency and that was the first they had heard about it.

That may have been the fault of their provincial organizations—I am not sure—but it certainly was not the case that the local organizations were made aware of what the ministry was proposing. In most cases, they had no objections to the streamlining of their constitutions and the way they operate, but I would like to find out exactly what kind of consultation took place and with whom the minister consulted.

**Hon. Mr. Riddell:** My staff had consultations with all three organizations under the former acts, and they all agreed quite unanimously that all be incorporated under the one act for administration purposes and for every other

reason conceivable. I simply have to say that there was quite extensive consultation with the various organizations. If we happened to miss an organization in the honourable member's riding, I regret that very much, but there was, as I say, quite extensive consultation.

**Mr. Wildman:** I apologize for the quality of my voice. I will have to speak in more dulcet tones than normal.

I do say that I am, as I indicated before, in support of the proposal. I listened with interest to the exchange between the minister and my colleague the member for Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry (Mr. Villeneuve) during question period. I noted that the minister read rather selectively from the Ontario Federation of Agriculture brief, in that he quoted the congratulatory remarks of the federation executive about the government's position on things like the free trade agreement, land stewardship, farm safety and so on. But the minister did not go on to point out that in the brief there are a number of areas the Ontario Federation of Agriculture found wanting in the government's approach to agriculture in the province.

I must say that this bill is not one of them. The objections, though, that the federation had to the process around here, I think, could be described as frustration over the lack of progress in the passage of legislation related to the farm community, Bill 66 being one of them.

The Ontario federation has been attempting to get government action on a number of bills. The government, up until now, has seemed to take the position that these bills were not a priority, and that rather bills such as the workers' compensation amendments, which are very important, were of greater priority; the government wanted to deal with those bills.

The problem with the example I use is that we believe the workers' compensation bill to be a very high priority, one we are very concerned about, and we do not agree with most of the changes. I think we made it very clear to the government that the debate on those bills, particularly the workers' compensation bill, or for that matter Sunday shopping changes, were going to take a long time. If the government's position was that those bills had to be dealt with before all of the other bills on the order paper, including these agricultural bills, then it was going to be a long time before we would be able to deal with them.

I am glad that after our discussions—the OFA with the cabinet and the OFA with the two opposition parties—the government House leader



and the two opposition House leaders were able to reach an agreement where we would be able to put aside those other very controversial and very important pieces of legislation to deal with these bills, which are important to the agricultural community.

Some of the legislation we will be dealing with this afternoon is less controversial than some of the other legislation. I would certainly agree that this is not one of the more controversial ones. I would say again, though, that when I contacted the agricultural societies and the horticultural organizations in my constituency, the horticultural organizations in particular were unaware of these changes. That may not be the fault of the minister or his ministry; it may, in fact, be a problem in communication within the horticultural organizations. That may be the case.

The agricultural societies, on the other hand, were aware that there were going to be changes, but they had not seen the legislation. I would like to raise, on second reading, some questions about part III of the bill, which deals with agricultural societies.

All of us in this House from rural Ontario will recognize that agricultural societies play one particular role in making nonfarm people aware of life on the farm: the new technologies, new developments in agriculture, and the importance of rural community life for people who perhaps may come from the city.

In section 26 of the bill, it states:

"An agricultural society may be incorporated if,

"(a) the articles of incorporation are signed by at least 60 persons who reside within 40 kilometres of the place designated as the headquarters of a society; and

"(b) at least 20 of the incorporators are engaged in an agricultural occupation."

I am not trying to be picayune here, but I do not quite understand what the minister means by "agricultural occupation." Obviously, someone who is engaged in producing farm produce is involved in an agricultural occupation. But is someone who supplies equipment, or seed or fertilizer, for instance, to the farm community involved in an agricultural occupation? In other words, how is this defined? What does it mean? Perhaps it does not really matter.

To be honest, some of the boards of the agricultural societies in my area have people on them who a layman might suggest are not very closely involved with agriculture, although they are interested in agriculture; teachers, for instance. I do not know whether, if one teaches in

an agricultural community, that is an agricultural occupation, but I would like to have that defined.

**1530**

I am concerned about section 27 as well, which states:

"If the headquarters of a proposed agricultural society is within 40 kilometres of the headquarters of an existing society, the minister shall notify the existing society and if it objects to the proposed society, the minister may refuse to incorporate the proposed society."

This is perhaps a little bit touchy. Without going into details, I will suggest that in my area there have been a couple of very well established agricultural societies, both of which have in recent years celebrated their centenaries, and there is also a new agricultural society, which is very active; it was formed about 10 years ago and is within 20 or 25 kilometres of the headquarters of one of the other two.

One of the societies has experienced some difficulties in recent years in attracting participants, exhibitors and also people who come to see the exhibits. It might be suggested that may be the result of the formation of the new and very active society not too distant in a community which I will admit is not a main agricultural centre.

I will say as well, though, that the three agricultural societies in my constituency are quite unique in each of their own ways. The Iron Bridge Agricultural Society has a fair every year. It is quite a small fair, but there is a very active group of people who put on the fair every year. It mainly has exhibits that relate to the farm household, as opposed to livestock, and also to farm crops.

The Central Algoma Agricultural Society puts on a fair every year that has a wide range of activities and exhibits, from household exhibits and baking to crops and livestock, both dairy and beef cattle, sheep and goats. As well, they also have a very extensive horse show.

The North Shore Agricultural Society, headquartered in my own municipality, has been very active and very successful and has been attempting to attract a lot of people from the city to come to see farm exhibits of all sorts. They have also been very active in attracting exhibitors from southern Ontario, whether they be government agencies such as the Ontario Science Centre, the museum of technology from Ottawa and so on. They have been very successful and very helpful to the farm community in advertising the way of life and the importance of new technology and new developments in agriculture.



One of the sections of the bill talks about grants to the agricultural societies and says the minister can make regulations related to grants. One of the main problems the agricultural societies have been experiencing in my area has been the difficulty of attracting good judges from southern Ontario. Since we are in the north and it is a long distance to travel, we have difficulty attracting experienced people, whether they be livestock judges or otherwise, who are different ones each year and have a different perspective.

I would like to know what the minister has in mind, if anything, to help the societies, particularly in eastern and northern Ontario, to attract judges and to help pay their expenses and our honorarium to improve the quality of judging and the variety of performers. I would also be interested in knowing what assistance might be made available to help attract performers to these areas for the entertainment shows that are put on as well.

I will say, though, that the volunteers from the Echo Bay-Bar River-Laird area in the North Shore society or the Bruce Mines area, Thessalon and so on, for the central Algoma area and the Iron Bridge area for the Iron Bridge Agricultural Society deserve a great deal of credit.

Just as a matter of interest, in closing, I would like to refer to section 41 of the bill, where it suggests this under regulations:

"41. The Lieutenant Governor in Council may make regulations,

"(a) providing the terms and conditions upon which an agricultural society may hold races or trials of speed for horses and the amount of the prizes awarded therefor."

That is of particular interest to me since a few years ago I attended the Central Algoma Exhibition. They put on a horse race and perhaps some of the riders were not too experienced. One of the horses got away and charged into the crowd and stepped on my foot. One of the reasons it stepped on my foot was that I was trying to protect a child who was beside me from the horse and I was paying more attention to the child than myself in getting out of the way of the horse.

I will not mention who was riding the horse. The fact that the individual was a well-known member of another political party I think is irrelevant to the fact that he charged into me. At any rate, they have not had any horse races at that fair since.

I would hope that whatever regulations are set out do not just deal with trying to control and ensure there is not, say, gambling taking place without the proper regulation but also ensure

proper safety for the participants as well as the spectators, because we were lucky that nobody was injured, including myself, particularly; I just had a sore foot for a few days.

At any rate, we support the bill. We congratulate the volunteers who work in our agricultural and horticultural societies across the province and we congratulate the minister for finally getting this matter before the House for second reading.

**M. Villeneuve:** Il me fait plaisir de participer au débat sur le projet de loi 66, An Act respecting Agricultural and Horticultural Organizations.

I am going to comment a little also on our agricultural societies, the ones that sponsor the vast majority, if not all, of the agricultural fairs throughout rural Ontario that bring the city, the town and the country together. I think quite often agriculture gets a bit of a profile from having some of our city and village cousins visit our agricultural fairs.

The big problem, as I am sure the minister is aware, is liability. Liability has many, many agricultural societies very, very nervous. I think the minister must bear in mind the cost of liability coverage for injuries and damage that occurs. In particular, we could cite several instances where this has been of major concern and remains a major concern to agricultural societies and to their members, individually and collectively.

**1540**

In the riding that I very proudly represent, we have several very seasoned agricultural societies. I will mention the one in my home town of Maxville, the Ontario Chianina Association, which will be celebrating its centennial in 1989. Certainly another one in the immediate vicinity, one that has celebrated its 175th anniversary, is the Williamstown Fair at Williamstown, which I very proudly represented until the last election; after redistribution, my colleague from Cornwall, who is in the Legislature today, now represents the area.

Certainly we have a number of other agricultural societies, very high-profile, long-standing agricultural societies, in the ridings of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry and Leeds-Grenville, and I think they are making very high-profile contributions towards smoothing out the process of having city and town understand what goes on down on the farm. It is a lot more sophisticated than it used to be.

In the act—it is an housekeeping act, and certainly our party fully supports it—I would like the minister to do whatever he can to assist our agricultural societies in the area of liability. I



think we have to address that on an individual basis because I can recall several agricultural fairs that have been postponed, and indeed may never revive, because of the possibility of litigation and a situation where the cost to cover their liability requirements, they feel, is exorbitant.

I know the ministry in its wisdom has seen fit to cut back some of the funding to agricultural societies, and I think we should take a second look at the contributions of these agricultural societies, in sponsoring our farm fairs throughout the province of Ontario, towards harmonizing city, town and country.

Monsieur le Président, il me fait plaisir d'avoir participé brièvement au débat. Notre parti appuie le projet de loi 66 tel qu'il a été présenté par le ministre de l'Agriculture et de l'Alimentation (M. Riddell).

**Le Vice-Président:** Merci. Est-ce qu'il y a des députés qui ont des questions et des commentaires?

**Mr. McGuigan:** I wish to commend the minister for bringing forth this amalgamation of bills. I just want to comment on one aspect. Some years ago—as a matter of fact it was during the 1981 election—there was a great controversy raging in my riding with one of the agricultural societies, namely, the society at Dresden, over jurisdiction, whether it should be the horsemen, who were very much involved because they hold races there, or whether it should be the farmers, the agricultural-horticultural people.

I was getting calls from both sides of the issue and decided during the election to go and attend their annual meeting, spend the day there and learn the issues involved. What had happened was the society had hired a so-called expert to run the races. This expert brought in a lot of modern facilities and proceeded to lose a lot of money. The society was very much concerned about whether it was going to go broke or not, following that course of action. Eventually the experts were let go and local people took over; today you have a flourishing horse aspect of the society run by local people.

But there was a good deal of questioning as to whether it was appropriate to have horse racing as part of an agricultural society. I noticed that question has been settled under part III, clause 28(f), where it says those things can be done when “conducting or promoting horse races when authorized to do so by a bylaw of the society.”

That is one area where this act has come up to date. I simply mention it because it was a matter

of great controversy in my riding in the town of Dresden. Dresden is no longer part of the riding today, but I certainly remember that episode and I wish to commend the minister for taking care of that oversight within the old act.

**Hon. Mr. Riddell:** I want to thank all the honourable members for their remarks and their support of this bill.

Going back to the remarks of the opposition Agriculture and Food critic, I want to emphasize once again that there was considerable consultation with the Ontario Horticultural Association and the Ontario Association of Agricultural Societies, more or less the parent organizations of all the local associations and societies throughout the province.

The member was a little critical about the delay in getting these bills through the House. I guess there were a number of reasons for this, and I guess maybe the opposition members have to assume some of the responsibility for the delays. It seems to me that at the time I introduced these bills, they were prolonging the activities of the House by participating in rather prolonged debates on the retail store hours, holding up work that I felt should be done in the House. But we could not get at it because of the various tactics used by the opposition members to prolong debates on such matters as the retail store hours.

The very fact that we are doing five agricultural bills today and tomorrow I think speaks of this government's commitment to the agricultural industry. I do not know of any other minister who has had a chance to deal with five of his bills hand-running, as I am able to do today and tomorrow.

As far as the government's commitment to agriculture is concerned, I think maybe the honourable member was getting a little off track when he was talking about this government's commitment to agriculture. But I just want to say that the agricultural budget since I became minister has increased by 73 per cent, and if you talk about the direct transfers to farmers, we have increased the budget by about 100 per cent. We certainly do not take a back seat to any former government from the standpoint of our commitment to agriculture and the food industry.

Some of the other comments that were made had to do with section 26 and how we arrive at an agricultural occupation under subsection 26(b), “at least 20 of the incorporators are engaged in an agricultural occupation.”

Anybody who makes his livelihood out of agriculture, such as seed dealers and florists, is



included. As a teacher in secondary school teaching agriculture, I was pretty active in agricultural societies within my own riding. As I say, anyone who makes his livelihood out of a profession that has anything to do with agriculture would certainly be considered as one of the incorporators engaged in an agricultural occupation.

Some reference was made to the 40 kilometres: "If the headquarters of a proposed agricultural society is within 40 kilometres of the headquarters of an existing society, the minister shall notify the existing society and if it objects to the proposed society, the minister may refuse to incorporate the proposed society."

This just encourages the various groups that wish to organize to at least get together and talk about it. If they see that their objectives are the same, if they see that they are reaching out to the same people, striving for the same goals, then maybe one organization rather than two would probably end up doing a far better job and providing a far better service to the community. As far as I am concerned, we have never turned down an application for a society. I think I am speaking on behalf of my staff, who say that, in their memory, they have never known this ministry or its minister of the day to turn down an application.

**1550**

There were also comments from the official opposition critic regarding grants. I would say that our grants continue as they did in the past. There has been no reduction in grants, from the standpoint of this government, but as in many other cases, what we are seeing is the federal government pulling away its commitment to the agriculture and food community in many areas. We certainly do not intend to do that. We will be continuing with the commitment we have made to the agricultural organizations.

I will say to the opposition critic that grants are payable for two thirds of the expenses of judges. So if it is a case of pulling in a judge from southern Ontario to judge in northern Ontario, two thirds of his expenses will be paid.

As far as paying for performers to go up there is concerned, I think northern Ontario has just as good performers as they have in southern Ontario and I do not think northern Ontario needs performers to come up from southern Ontario to put on a show. They have all kinds of talent in the north, as they have in the east, and they certainly do not need to rely on southern Ontario people to provide the kind of entertainment they have at some of these fairs and events.

The critic for the Conservative Party asked about liability insurance. We did go through a time when it was difficult to get insurance, and in some cases it meant we could no longer have horses at plowing matches and things like this. The member will know that the Ontario government stepped in and helped to establish the Ontario liability insurance association. It is a pool the agricultural societies can rely on. I would say about two thirds of agricultural fair policies were covered by the Ontario liability insurance association pool last year.

Some of these societies have accepted coverage from individual insurance companies this year. It is my understanding that insurance companies are now more or less clamouring to get the business with these agricultural societies, because it is a very competitive business, as the member well knows. I do not think any of the agricultural societies or organizations will have difficulty getting insurance to carry on their fairs this year. I understand that if societies are unable to find liability coverage on the open market again this year, they will be offered coverage through the liability pool at approximately the same cost as in 1986. We do not really see that as being a problem.

I have already commented on the honourable member's remarks about cutting back funding to agricultural societies. We have not cut back funding to agricultural societies. As a matter of fact, it is stipulated in regulations now that \$930,000 will be going out to agricultural societies and \$275,000 will be going out to horticultural societies. That gives the member some idea of our commitment by way of funding these most important organizations. There is no question, and I agree with my honourable friends, they do provide an excellent service to rural Ontario and to our rural Ontario communities.

With those remarks, I want to again thank my critics and colleagues for their support of this legislation.

Motion agreed to.

Bill ordered for third reading.

#### GRAIN ELEVATOR STORAGE AMENDMENT ACT

Hon. Mr. Riddell moved second reading of Bill 139, An Act to amend the Grain Elevator Storage Act.

**Hon. Mr. Riddell:** I am tabling the bill to amend the Grain Elevator Storage Act for second reading. The act provides for the licensing and



regulation of grain elevators which store grain for owners.

Currently, the safety of the financial interests of the grain owners is ensured through the licensing and inspections of elevators conducted by inspectors who are appointed under the act. The elevator operators must maintain grain inventories which are at least equal to the commitment for storage which they make to the grain owners. The amendment will permit the elevator operator to market the grain he has in storage, provided the operator has posted an easily redeemable financial security with the chief inspector. These shortfall permits, as they are called, will give operators opportunities to take advantage of rapidly changing markets.

The inspector will also take samples of grain to confirm that the type and grade of grain in the elevator matches the grain described in the storage receipts and the weigh tickets.

In the proposed amendment, section 10a, the chief inspector could immediately suspend or refuse to renew a licence if he believed the interests of the owners of the stored product were at risk, pending a formal hearing as provided for in the act.

Currently, an operator must issue a storage receipt to an owner of farm produce within 30 days of the receipt of the first load of grain. This requirement is hard to satisfy because many producers harvest and deliver their crops over a period that is longer than 30 days. The amendment will extend the deadline for the issue of a storage receipt to 45 days.

Instead of issuing one licence for each branch of an elevator company, the chief inspector will be able to issue one licence to elevator operators with several branches.

The operators will only have to carry insurance on the product that is being stored for the grain owners. Subsection 19(4) would be amended to state that the insurance would only be on farm produce. The purpose of this amendment to the legislation is to improve the marketing of Ontario grain. This will be accomplished by authorizing grain elevator operators to market the stored product with the authority of the chief inspector.

**Mr. Wildman:** Again, I rise on behalf of my party in support of Bill 139, An Act to amend the Grain Elevator Storage Act. Basically, the bill allows for proper regulation, inspection and licensing of grain storage facilities and the marketing of grain. For these reasons, we are in support of the legislation. It is hardly controversial.

I am, however, interested in the suggestion in the bill that the inspector can enter premises for the purpose of taking samples. I wonder what provision there is if on some occasions there are objections to the inspector carrying out his duties. I may have missed it in the bill, but I would like to hear from the minister what provision there is to assist the inspector to carry out his duties and at the same time to allow for the proper protection of the facilities from what some people might consider overzealous carrying out of duties, if that might be a problem.

**1600**

I think the suggestion that a group of elevators, rather than each individual elevator, be allowed to be licensed is a good one and will make for greater efficiency.

Also, the provisions for the chief inspector to close down operations of an operator who is in default on commitments or not financially responsible is a way of protecting the interests of the owners of farm produce that is stored in the elevator. As the minister indicated, the chief inspector currently does not have that authority and this bill will provide him with that. Obviously, there have been unfortunate situations in the past where producers have been harmed because of financial problems the storage companies have encountered.

I would be interested if the minister could expand on the problems related to the issuance of storage receipts, as we are extending in this bill the deadline to 45 days from 30 days. Is there any particular reason that figure was chosen and is there evidence that that will be sufficient, as there is a difficulty now in meeting the obligation in a month?

Again, the insurance provisions are useful as protection for the producers and the amendment will clarify the insurance which is required under the legislation. As well, the marketing of grain with the financial security will allow for a more regular approach to the marketing of grain.

Again, we find this is a noncontroversial piece of legislation and we are in general support. I hope the minister can give us that clarification.

**Mr. Villeneuve:** I have a few brief comments on Bill 139, the Grain Elevator Storage Amendment Act. Certainly, some upgrading and some additional protection was needed and I think this is a fairly straightforward bill.

The licensing and administrative amendments are proposed to increase the efficiency and update the Grain Elevator Storage Act. Also, the shortfall permits are intended to enhance the ability of the grain industry to take maximum



advantage of the marketplace. Certainly, none of us could argue with that.

My concern is that we are at present completing a harvest in Ontario which has been reasonably good in the eastern section. However, the grain volume and yield in central and western Ontario in certain areas was certainly something less than what had been anticipated. The prices are considerably higher than they have been over the last five years and that is something to be thankful for.

However, I think this minister, along with a number of his colleagues in cabinet, must look at alternative uses for grain. The Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley) often talks about some of the problems of automobile emissions and acid rain. I certainly know that using a methanol-ethanol combination would greatly reduce the gasoline emissions and would put us in an area that would be comparable to the California standards.

It is pretty easy for the Minister of the Environment in this province to complain. However, I believe we have to get our own house in order; and processing grain into alcohol, for use as a fuel octane additive, would greatly enhance the environment and provide a ready market for both the production of alcohol and for the byproduct, a high-protein concentrate feed for livestock, for which there is very ready demand, not only here in Ontario, but also in Canada and in Europe.

Yes, we will be supporting Bill 139, the Grain Elevator Storage Amendment Act, but I respectfully ask the minister to seriously consider alternative uses for our Ontario-grown grain, to clean up our environment and provide us with a stronger market, which I am sure will be needed at this time next year.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. M. C. Ray):** Are there any comments or questions with respect to the member's statement? If not, would the minister care to close out the debate with his reply?

**Hon. Mr. Riddell:** Once again, I want to thank my opposition critics for their support of this legislation.

Interjection.

**Hon. Mr. Riddell:** Well, it is rather important that we do get this piece of legislation passed, because the day is coming when the elevator operators will want to start to move some of the crop they have in storage.

The official opposition critic was asking what would happen if an elevator operator refused entry to one of the inspectors to check the grain

inventories. The inspector can certainly get a warrant. It is the court's decision to offer authority to enter and the court has to allow a warrant. So there would be no difficulty for an inspector to get in to check the grain inventories.

The member was wondering how we arrived at 45 days. We feel that in a period of 45 days the farmer would have had sufficient time, under normal circumstances, to get his crop harvested. That is why we extended it from 30 days to 45 days.

To comment on the remarks of the critic for the Conservative Party, I want him to know we are looking at alternative uses of grain. I agree with the member, if we have a surplus of a product grown on the farm that we cannot use for food purposes, but we could use for other purposes, I think we should be exploring those purposes.

Interjection.

**Hon. Mr. Riddell:** He is right. I do not disagree with the member. I just want him to know that we definitely will be considering alternative uses from here on in.

Motion agreed to.

Bill ordered for third reading.

1610

#### FARM PRODUCTS CONTAINERS ACT

**Hon. Mr. Riddell** moved second reading of Bill 140, An Act to revise the Farm Products Containers Act.

**Hon. Mr. Riddell:** I rise to table the Farm Products Containers Act for second reading. Since the previous legislation named only fruit, vegetable and honey producers, other producer associations have not been able to participate. Several associations, such as the Ontario Maple Syrup Producers' Association and Flowers Canada, have approached the ministry to request changes to the act so they could raise funds for research and promotion.

Under the proposed amendments, the provisions of the act will be extended to any association representing producers of farm products. Producers will, of course, be consulted before any proposal for a funding scheme is implemented. The new act provides a mechanism for agricultural associations to generate revenue for their activities through a producer licence fee added to the sale price of product containers.

The associations will also have the authority to audit the container sellers as well as individual producers to ensure they are receiving the licence fees that should be accruing to them. Containers purchased outside Ontario will now also have a



licence fee that will be collected by the associations. To ensure the compliance of the container sellers and producers, the fines that are levied under the act will be raised substantially from their present levels.

These proposed amendments to the Farm Products Containers Act comply with the policy of my ministry to encourage the self-sufficiency of industry associations.

**Mr. Wildman:** I again arise on behalf of the New Democratic Party in support of the bill to amend the Farm Products Containers Act. If I can keep my voice, I will put forward our views.

The Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers' Association has indicated it is in support of the legislation. Obviously, they are hoping that with it they will be able to collect a producer levy and, in this way, have a major new funding mechanism for the association which they can use to continue their work on behalf of the producers and growers. Obviously, this is something the industry wishes. We have no problems with it at all; we are very much in favour of it.

Also, as the legislation broadens the possibility of farm products and associations, by regulation, coming under this kind of provision, it adds flexibility to other producer groups. For that reason, we would be in support as well.

I am interested particularly in the provisions with regard to the inspections and the audits. I noted that there is a difference between this piece of legislation and the previous one we just debated. As the minister indicated in his response to my query, Bill 139 provided for warrants if there were some problem on entry to obtain information, yet Bill 140 as presented does not. I refer specifically to section 6. It states under subsection 6(1):

"An inspector or auditor, as applicable, may enter and have access to any premises for the purpose of examining the records mentioned in subsection 4(1) or 5(1)."

Section 4(1) is: "The records of the associations that relate to the purchase or sale of containers may be audited by an inspector."

Section 5(1) is: "The records of producers and sellers of containers that relate to the purchase or sale of containers may be audited by an auditor appointed by the association." So it states that an auditor or an inspector may enter and have access.

It then further goes on in subsection 6(2) to state, "An inspector or auditor may remove the records in order to make copies but shall immediately return them."

If you look at subsection 6(6), the bill states: "A copy of a record purporting to be certified by an inspector or auditor to be a copy made under subsection (2) is admissible in evidence in a judicial proceeding and has the same evidentiary value as the original document without proof of the signature of the inspector or auditor or of his or her being in fact the inspector or auditor."

What this says is that an inspector or auditor can make copies, return the originals, and that that copy subsequently might be used and is admissible as evidence in court. However, subsection 6(3) states, "Subsection (1) is not authority to enter a private residence without the consent of the occupier."

I have never claimed to be a lawyer or to have legal training—

**Mr. McGuigan:** Look at subsection 6(7) again.

**Mr. Wildman:** That is just what I want to come to. Before I look at subsection 6(7), let's look at subsection 6(4). It says, "The authority under subsection (1) shall be exercised only at reasonable times." That makes sense. But then subsection 6(7) says, "No person shall hinder or obstruct an inspector or auditor in the course of his or her duties or furnish the inspector or auditor with false information or refuse to furnish him or her with information."

My reading of that group of subsections means that an inspector can have access to and can enter anything but private premises and can enter private premises only if he has the permission of the occupier. It seems to me that the minister is defeating his own purpose. If part of the duty of the inspector or auditor is not to enter private premises without consent of the occupier, then if someone refuses access, he or she is not, as far as I am concerned, violating subsection 6(7), because part of the inspector's duty is to not enter without the permission of the occupier.

It seems to me that what the minister should do is to add the provision that if there is a problem, the inspector or the auditor should then be able to go to a justice of the peace and obtain a warrant if the justice of the peace believed that were warranted, and thus be able to gain access and obtain the information the legislation intends for him or her to be able to obtain.

Unless I can be convinced that this is not necessary, even though it was necessary in Bill 139, I will be moving an amendment to provide for that.

**Mr. McGuigan:** I think the act is quite full, in that under subsection 6(7) it says, "No person shall hinder or obstruct an inspector or auditor in



the course of his or her duties or furnish the inspector or auditor with false information or refuse to furnish him or her with information."

It strikes me that the word "refuse" brings in the possibility of fines of \$5,000 for a first offence and \$10,000 for a second offence. I do not know what the minister's position on entering private homes would be, but I think we have a tradition in this country that it is only under very unusual circumstances that we violate the sanctity of a person's home. I believe that is a long-standing tradition, although the minister may have other comments on that.

1620

**Mr. Wildman:** I certainly agree with my colleague the member for Essex-Kent (Mr. McGuigan) that it would have to be a very unusual circumstance, and I think the provision under the normal workings of the court and the law is that it is not easy to gain a warrant; that there has to be considerable evidence provided to the justice of the peace to persuade that individual to agree to give a warrant for an entry when entry is being refused onto private premises.

All of us recognize the sanctity of one's private home and would not want to give inspectors, auditors or any official free access against the wishes of the owner. However, there may be situations, as was recognized under Bill 139, where it is not unreasonable for the inspector or auditor to wish to gain access in order to carry out his or her duties and that access may be refused. I think it is reasonable then to provide for the application for a warrant in order to gain access.

As I indicated to the minister already, unless it can be shown that it is not necessary, I will be moving an amendment to make it possible.

**Mr. Villeneuve:** I too want to comment briefly on Bill 140 amending the Farm Products Containers Act.

I have correspondence here from Michael Mazer, the assistant executive secretary to the Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers' Association. They are in full agreement with the amendments which will correct some inequities that have been occurring, particularly on imported products. Currently the producers are required to pay licence fees on container purchases from sellers within Ontario and not on purchases from out-of-province sellers. The bill will effectively require producers to submit licence fees on out-of-province purchases by paying them directly to the association rather than through the seller, as they do for in-province purchases.

I understand that this act is the major funding mechanism for the Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers' Association. I can appreciate why it is their hope that Bill 140, which would amend the Farm Products Containers Act, would indeed be passed rather quickly.

Reference is also made to the honey producers of Ontario, and I have recently had fairly extensive discussions with one of the major honey producers in my constituency. They are very concerned at the support they are receiving presently from Ontario. I was astounded to be made aware of the fact that, I think, all other provinces are providing considerably higher financial assistance to that particular industry.

Certainly it is not the time and place to be discussing this, but it is mentioned in section 1 that it applies to honey, fruit and vegetable producers. I would like to make the minister aware of the fact that there is considerable discussion out there with the honey producers of this province, and we will be making representation on their behalf for the ministry and the minister to have a look at the method of supporting that industry, which, although not extensive in Ontario, is very important, particularly to some of our small grain producers; the pollination process is most important. As the minister knows, with some of the chemicals being applied right now, they have gone through some very difficult times.

Our party will be supporting Bill 140, the Farm Products Containers Act, and I look forward to participating further in other debates, as I mentioned previously.

**Mr. Wildman:** I want to underline the comments of my friend from the united counties with regard to the economic situation facing the honey producers. I know that it may not be central to the principle of this bill, but we should use any chance we have to raise this problem.

**Mr. McGuigan:** I want to comment briefly on this bill, because I have had a long association with the Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers' Association. In fact, I was president in 1974 and took part in discussions working towards the forerunner of this bill. There are two comments I want to make.

When you set up a system of giving enabling legislation for any organization to raise funds, there always is a question of how to raise those funds fairly so that each part of the industry and each person in the industry is treated on an equitable basis. It has been found over the years that the container toll, as it is known, has been a very fair system because all of these products



require about the same percentage of their total cost to be put into containers. You will find very little argument among producers as to the fairness of an apple producer versus a peach producer versus a honey producer. That has always been a matter of harmony.

The one thing that has caused a disharmony has been the odd producer of containers who refused to deduct the allocation and therefore had an edge in the market by selling his product a little more cheaply. Also, a few people would go to the United States to buy their containers and thereby avoid the levy on containers. Those areas are covered very well in these amendments.

We are very happy to see the producers of flowers, honey and so on included in this act. These organizations have always been very close to the Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers' Association, but now this affords them full membership in the group of people who use these moneys to further their industry. I commend the minister for bringing forward this act.

**The Acting Speaker:** Are there any comments or questions on the statement by the member for Essex-Kent? Are there any other participants in the debate? Would the minister care to close the debate with his reply?

**Hon. Mr. Riddell:** Once again, I want to thank my colleagues for their comments and their support of this bill. I think there was just one concern expressed that pertained to the bill—not that there were not other concerns expressed—and that was the right to enter private premises. I want to thank the critic for the official opposition for sending me a copy of the amendment he was prepared to propose if this goes to committee. I want to say to the member that the proposed amendment would permit individuals who are not peace officers, government inspectors or provincial offences officers to obtain warrants to search private premises. This would certainly set a precedent that would not be acceptable to the judicial system, and we should be careful before we infringe on individual rights.

Let me re-emphasize that in giving search powers we must be careful that we do not infringe the Charter of Rights. We also have a legal opinion from the Attorney General (Mr. Scott) that raises concerns where a nongovernment employee or a peace officer can get a warrant. I would ask my honourable friend to consider carefully the amendment he wants to propose if this goes to committee, because it could well infringe on individual rights under the Charter of Rights and would be setting, we think, a rather dangerous precedent.

Motion agreed to.

Bill ordered for committee of the whole House.

**1630**

House in committee of the whole.

#### FARM PRODUCTS CONTAINERS ACT

Consideration of Bill 140, An Act to revise the Farm Products Containers Act.

**Mr. Chairman:** Comments, questions? If so, to which sections, please?

**Mr. Wildman:** I have an amendment that I have provided to the table to subsection 6(3).

Sections 1 to 5, inclusive, agreed to.

Section 6:

**Mr. Chairman:** Mr. Wildman moves that subsection 6(3) of the bill be amended by adding at the end "except under the authority of a warrant issued under section 142 of the Provincial Offences Act."

**Mr. Wildman:** I listened carefully to the minister's remarks about the opinion of the Attorney General and the concern he has for this as a precedent. I will just point out that in a sense this is not a precedent, in that we just last week debated Bill 175 on second reading and one of the provisions of that bill provided for inspectors to be able to apply for a warrant. I remind the minister that was a government bill.

I do not know what the opinion of the Attorney General was on that piece of legislation brought forward by the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Kerrio), but he obviously did not have the objections he has put forward in regard to this bill, because that bill sets out in great detail, much more detail than my amendment, how an inspector who is inspecting any organization that may be transferring water can, if he is denied access, apply for and obtain a warrant. Under that piece of legislation, I am certain the individual who might be applying for the warrant is a peace officer.

All I am saying is that what is good for the goose is good for the gander, to use a good agricultural term. It seems to me that if we are going to allow for this kind of procedure in a bill that is designed to protect our water resources, there should not be any problem with also allowing it or using the same approach in a bill that is designed to protect farmers and their organizations.

For those reasons, I think this enhances rather than takes away from the effectiveness of the bill. I am surprised and a little concerned that the minister and the government have reacted the



way they have, because in my view this is a friendly amendment. As I have indicated, our party is in support of the legislation. We just want to make it more effective.

Certainly, I am concerned about the Charter of Rights argument. Neither the Minister of Agriculture and Food nor I are trained in the law. As I have said on other occasions, I think my decision not to attend law school was one of the best I ever made. However, I ended up in this place. Perhaps it might have helped to have some legal training.

I think if we can do it in one bill, we can do it in another. I suspect this did not happen, and I hope, Mr. Chairman, you would assure me, that the Minister of Natural Resources would not introduce a bill without consulting the legal people in the Ministry of the Attorney General. I am sure he did consult them.

If he did consult them and they agreed with the legislation as it was printed and drafted, then it is beyond me why they would object to this amendment, which is basically designed to give these inspectors the same powers the Minister of Natural Resources wanted to give his inspectors. Then again, perhaps it is the case that the Minister of Natural Resources was in such a rush to introduce that so-called anti-free-trade legislation that he did not properly consult with the Ministry of the Attorney General and did not get proper legal advice.

I am sure the Minister of Agriculture and Food would not believe that of his colleague the member for Niagara Falls. I am sure everything the Minister of Natural Resources does is thought out and cleared ahead of time and is checked with all the appropriate authorities.

My question basically is, why would the Ministry of the Attorney General and the Attorney General agree to this kind of legislation in Bill 175, but object to it in Bill 140?

**Mr. McCague:** Maybe the minister could help me with a problem, as I see it, with this legislation. The question I would like to ask the minister is, would it not be that with the premises referred to here, in many cases the place where the records were kept, would also be the private residence? I am a little confused about the distinction between "an inspector...may" on the one hand, but on the other hand he cannot enter a private residence without the consent of the occupier. It seems to me that will require there be a warrant in order to enter the premises.

If I recall correctly, and the minister could answer this question for me, similar sections to section 6 are in other legislation, particularly in

legislation we could interpret as being agricultural legislation. Maybe the minister could explain to me the two points I have raised.

**Hon. Mr. Riddell:** First, to respond to the official opposition critic, I simply want to reiterate the points I made before his amendment was proposed to the committee. I do not know whether my honourable friend appreciates the fact that the associations involved appoint their own auditors. I trust he is aware of that.

I also understand that the inspectors in Bill 175 are government inspectors, just as they are in our bill. I also understand, and here again I have to rely on the legal advice I am given, that inspectors are usually provincial offences officers. Just to reiterate, the proposed amendment would permit individuals who are not government inspectors or provincial offences officers to obtain warrants to search private premises. I do not think anyone would want that situation to prevail. This would set a precedent that would not be acceptable to the judicial system and we should be careful before we infringe upon individual rights.

1640

Therefore, I really think, and I hope my honourable friends will agree, that this proposed amendment should be rejected. I do not think for one minute the New Democratic Party would want us to do anything that was going to infringe on people's rights under the Charter of Rights. I have to tell the honourable member that if we think any legislation we will be introducing into the House could be challenged in the constitutional courts, we pass it by the Attorney General to get a comment from the Attorney General. In this case, we got a legal opinion from the Attorney General. There are concerns raised where a nongovernment employee or a provincial offences officer can get a warrant.

To respond to the member for—

**Mr. McCague:** Simcoe West.

**Hon. Mr. Riddell:** I know you are in around the Alliston area, George.

**Mr. McCague:** You were around the last while, too, looking for votes.

**Hon. Mr. Riddell:** I do not know. I cannot say whether there are other pieces of legislation. I was hoping that my sidekicks there under the gallery would slip a note up to me as to whether they are aware that this is in any other legislation, but they have not sent it to me, so I have to get back to the member on that.

**Mr. McCague:** There was a note came to the minister, but it did not mention this point, I guess.



**Hon. Mr. Riddell:** If you keep talking long enough, it may come yet.

**Mr. McCague:** I am more particularly interested in the answer to the question of how the inspectors get into a private residence if that, in fact, is where the records are kept. I am not at this point supporting the amendment by the New Democratic Party, but I am trying to get an answer out of the minister as to what happens if the records are kept in the private residence. If you cannot get in without consent of the occupier, if the occupier says no, then I presume the only way you can get in is by warrant. I am trying to be helpful, not obstructionist, in the point I am raising with the minister.

**Mr. Wildman:** Just a comment before the minister replies to the member for Simcoe West. Again, I am trying to be helpful here, too. I am not trying to stop the purpose of the bill. I am trying to make it possible for an inspector to gain access if not just he, but a justice of the peace, believes that access denied is still warranted, and thus be able to obtain a warrant to enter.

What happens if the organization keeps its records in a private residence and for some reason that is denied? How do they get in then? I accept the minister's criticisms with regard to the auditors since, as he points out, the auditors are appointed by the private organizations, but the inspectors are government inspectors. Certainly, they are not peace officers, but as I have indicated in other pieces of legislation, we have a precedent for government inspectors being able to obtain a warrant.

**Hon. Mr. Riddell:** First, let me say from my long experience in dealing with elevator operators and other business people that it is my experience that very few of those people keep their records in their private residence; they keep them in their place of business. But supposing they do keep them in a private residence, then government inspectors can get warrants to enter private residences, providing the government inspector is a provincial offences officer. An auditor cannot gain entry to a private residence.

**Mr. McGuigan:** I realize members opposite are trying to improve the act, but I suggest it really is not needed because in most cases we are dealing with relatively small amounts of money. This is a toll that is placed upon the wholesale price of the product. I think the figure is one per cent. It can vary, but I think the present figure is one per cent, so you are dealing with relatively small amounts of money.

As the minister says, a company that kept its records in private homes would probably be a

smaller company and you would be dealing with relatively small amounts of money, and fines that run from \$5,000 to \$10,000, it seems to me, would adequately cover the situation.

In the larger sense, when you compare it to, say, the Grain Elevator Storage Act, where you would be looking actually at a case of fraud where someone who had grain in storage sold that grain unknown to the owner of the grain, and pocketed the money, there you are certainly really getting into a criminal act. In those cases, more appropriate methods are necessary and greater powers are necessary.

I do not know in this case whether you would call it a fraud or not when a person withheld the toll. I think that would be a matter of judgement, but certainly I would not place it in the same category as someone who had taken a farmer's crop, his whole year's income, and sold that and pocketed the amount.

The old Gilbert and Sullivan operetta said, "Let the punishment fit the crime," and I think perhaps members might bear that in mind.

**Mr. Chairman:** Do other members wish to participate? If not, are we ready for the vote? Is it the pleasure of the committee that the motion carry?

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

Motion negatived.

Section 6 agreed to.

Sections 7 to 10, inclusive, agreed to.

Bill ordered to be reported.

On motion by Hon. Mr. Conway, the committee of the whole reported one bill without amendment.

1650

## FARM IMPLEMENTS ACT

Hon. Mr. Riddell moved second reading of Bill 78, An Act respecting the Sale of Farm Implements.

**Hon. Mr. Riddell:** I rise to introduce for second reading the proposed Farm Implements Act.

Farming in this province continues to be a capital-intensive industry requiring considerable investment in farm machinery. Ontario farmers spend some \$250 million annually for the purchase of farm implements and repair parts. The proposed act has been developed in response to long-standing requests made by farmers and the retail equipment sector to provide a formal



process for the resolution of problems arising from the sale, service, warranty operation, maintenance and safety of farm implements and repair parts. It will replace the voluntary certification program, which was based on the farm machinery code. Support for this voluntary program, which was introduced in 1980, has diminished in recent years and no longer adequately ensures an acceptable level of program delivery.

The new act calls for a registration system for dealers and distributors, standardized sales contracts, establishment of minimum warranties and required availability of emergency repair parts. Also included in the act are provisions to return equipment that fails to perform to manufacturers' specifications, a supervision of safety standards and provision for buyback agreements between distributors and dealers.

The proposed Farm Implements Act would be administered by a board consisting of members who are actively engaged in one of the following endeavours: farming, manufacturing, distributing, retailing or farm implement repairs in Ontario. The Ontario Farm Implements Board would be authorized to mediate disputes between farmers and the equipment industry. The board would also be empowered to adopt safety standards or minimum requirements that would be implemented when equipment is sold by dealers. These would include the requirement of safety and operating instruction and supporting documentation. The board would also develop, administer and operate safety programs relating to equipment.

I urge the members of the House to standardize the practices of Ontario's retail and wholesale farm machinery sector and provide consumer protection for our farmers by approving second reading of the Farm Implements Act. Later today I plan to introduce some technical amendments and a substantive change to the bill as a result of further consultation with the Ontario Federation of Agriculture and the Ontario Retail Farm Equipment Dealers' Association.

**The Acting Speaker:** Are there any comments or questions on the statement by the Minister of Agriculture and Food? Are there any other participants in the debate?

**Mr. Wildman:** It might be helpful if the minister gave us some idea of what his substantive change is. I have received the copies of it, but is it included in the amendment he has already provided to us?

**Hon. Mr. Riddell:** Yes.

**Mr. Wildman:** All right, fine.

**The Acting Speaker:** Now are there any other participants in the debate?

**Mr. Wildman:** I rise to participate in this debate with a bit of *déjà vu*. This has been a long, ongoing process, one that has involved representatives of the Ontario Farm Machinery Board, one of whom we have in the gallery with us today, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture—I guess he wears two hats—the Ontario Retail Farm Equipment Dealers' Association and farm groups.

This is a very important piece of legislation and one I have been an advocate of for some time, as the minister is aware. I want to congratulate the participants in the ministry, in the Ontario Federation of Agriculture and in the farm machinery board and the dealers who have worked to try to come up with a consensus to deal with a very important set of problems that faces the farm community.

All of us realize that a piece of machinery never seems to break down except when it is most needed, whether you are talking about the harvest season or seeding. The problem many dealers and farmers have had in the past is that it is sometimes very difficult to obtain replacement parts or to have warranties properly fulfilled and to get these things done as quickly as possible so that the machinery is available to do the work required at the time and season. This matter is a particular problem in my part of the province, but it is a problem all over rural Ontario. I suppose it may be a somewhat greater problem in the areas of the north, where we do not have as many farmers or as many dealerships, but it can be a difficulty for all rural communities.

It is because of the particular problems of my constituents that I began studying this area of concern a number of years ago and first introduced a private member's bill in the House patterned after legislation in western Canada. The Bill 78 we have before us today is also patterned after legislation in western Canada. My bill drew particularly from the legislation in Manitoba. This bill has incorporated some aspects of my bill but is also built upon the legislation in Alberta.

The consensus was not easily arrived at. As the minister said, the voluntary system has been somewhat discredited over the years. The board has worked hard to try to resolve disputes between farmers and dealers or farmers and manufacturing companies over the years, in some cases with success, in others with less success. It is perceived that there is a need for



legislation that would set up a compulsory system which would require dealers, distributors and manufacturing firms to comply with certain regulations that would make it possible for the farm community to get the kind of service it requires.

Obviously, there are many times when disputes arise between a purchaser or a dealer and distributor, and there is a need to resolve those disputes in some way. This bill provides for the setting up of mediation and for a hearing. I wonder, though, if the provisions set out in the bill in some cases go far enough. For instance, in subsection 5(11) on page 5 of the bill it states, "The board may work with manufacturers to encourage standardization of the design and operation of controls of the farm implements manufactured for sale in Ontario."

I know we have a tradition in the House of drafting legislation using the word "may." There is also a tradition, I guess, of the opposition getting up in debate and saying: "Why do you say 'may'? Why not say 'shall'?" I ask this question in regard to this subsection.

**1700**

Further on in the bill it sets out the provisions of a sale agreement requiring that the date of delivery be stated to the purchaser; that the names and addresses of the purchaser, dealer and distributor be involved; that "the warranties provided under this act and any additional or extended warranties" be made clear.

It also sets out the requirement: "If the serial or model number of the implement is not available when the sale agreement is entered into, the dealer shall provide the information to the purchaser on or before the delivery of the farm implement to the purchaser."

The sections that deal with warranties are of particular interest to me because they are very similar to certain sections of my private member's bill. Obviously, the warranty should require that if the implement does not perform to the manufacturer's specifications and do the work it is intended to do, there be ways of remedying the situation, particularly in the case of a tractor if it breaks down and does not operate as it is supposed to within the first 1,000 hours of operation. Also, the provision is for combines and less than 500 hours of operation, and in all other cases, one year.

It seems to me that it is necessary that we warrant farm machinery for these very reasonable periods of time. Surely a machine should be able to operate, whether it is a tractor or combine or some other implement, at least for one year.

When one considers the kinds of warranties now being provided on automobiles—and I will admit that farm machinery may go through a lot greater wear and tear than the average automobile—the tremendous cost of farm machinery today and the kind of investment a farmer has to lay out in order to purchase a tractor or a combine warrants provision to ensure that if that machine breaks down or if that implement does not perform as it is supposed to, there is some redress for the purchaser.

Obviously, if you are going to set out these requirements for a number of hours, you have to have some way of checking and metering the hours. This bill provides for that.

Section 15 of the bill says, "On the sale of a new farm implement there is an implied warranty that a sufficient supply of repair parts for the farm implement will be available to the purchaser for a period of 10 years from the effective date."

This is very similar to the legislation I have put forward. One of the problems we faced in the past, as farm machinery manufacturers have experienced difficulties because of the economic situation facing farmers, is that a number of them have ceased production, laid off their workers and discontinued their product line. That can be a very serious problem for the purchaser. Obviously, if the purchaser puts out \$120,000 for a piece of machinery and then does not have any guarantee that there are going to be parts available, it can put the purchaser, the farmer, into a very serious situation, so it is important that we have this implied warranty.

Subsection 16(1) also says:

"On the sale of a new repair part there is an implied warranty that the repair part will be free from defects...for a period of 90 days from the date of purchase or, if purchased out of the season of use, 90 days from the date it is first used..."

Again, obviously, if you are going to provide repair parts under a warranty, the parts have to be warranted; otherwise, it defeats the purpose of the warranty. I think it is important, too, to recognize that under this bill the distributor of the farm implement is liable to the purchaser to honour the warranties under the sections that I have quoted, and the dealer and the distributor of a new farm implement are jointly and severally liable to the purchaser to honour the warranty under section 15.

I think it is important to recognize that small farm implement dealers sometimes face situations as difficult in dealing with distributors and manufacturers as do the farmers. I think most



dealers living and working in small farm communities understand the problems that face the farmer, want to serve their neighbours well and want to be able to ensure that they keep their business; and if they find themselves in a situation where they cannot get a repair part when it is required by their customer, or the parts have been discontinued, or the parts that are available are defective, then it makes it difficult for the dealer to continue to carry out his business in the way that he or she would want to be able to.

My bill dealt particularly with the situation of emergency repairs and the difficulties that farmers face in season if a machine that is necessary for that particular farm operation breaks down. That was my main concern when I introduced my legislation before the House.

I do take some pride in pointing out that the provisions of this bill look to me very similar to my bill. I would never accuse the minister of plagiarism, but I would say that I was told once—

**Hon. Mr. Riddell:** That is why we are working together.

**Mr. Wildman:** Yes, we are working together.

I was told once by a university professor that plagiarism was a great form of flattery, but flattery would get me nowhere.

**Mr. Miller:** Do you not get some satisfaction from being flattered?

**Mr. Wildman:** Exactly. I am saying I take some pride in this. I am very happy that this is done. What this bill does which is similar to my bill is to require that parts be available at a dealer's place of business within three working days, 72 hours, of the day the order was placed, unless the parts cannot be made—that is, it might be a part that rarely breaks and there is not a great demand for it, and so you could hardly expect a dealer to keep an inventory of that kind of part—but unless the part cannot be made within that time because of conditions beyond the distributor's control. However, if the parts are not available in the time prescribed in the act, then there are provisions to ensure that the farmer will be able to continue to do the operation in the time in which he requires it to be done. This is incumbent on the dealer and the distributor.

1710

“If...the dealer fails to properly place an order for emergency repair parts, the dealer shall be liable to supply the purchaser with a satisfactory substitute farm implement, within” the 72 hours, “at one half of the prescribed normal rental rate for that implement.” Further on, there are provisions for regulations to be set to determine

what the normal rental rate would be and to have them updated.

“If the dealer is unable to provide a satisfactory substitute farm implement, the dealer shall be liable to reimburse the purchaser one half of the prescribed normal rental rate for a substitute farm implement rented from a third party.”

I agree with this provision. It is similar to what was in my bill. I will point out, though, that in my part of the province this is not going to help most farmers, because there are not many custom operators in my area. There are some, but there are not many who do rent their equipment or go out and do custom work on a regular basis, not as many as there might be in the cash crop areas of southern Ontario. I support this because it will be useful in those parts of the province. I just mention the proviso, though, that it may not be too helpful in some parts of the north.

**Mr. Laughren:** Right on. I've already had complaints.

**Mr. Wildman:** The farmer from Nickel Belt has had a lot of complaints about this.

**Mr. Villeneuve:** You should use a crusher.

**Mr. Wildman:** When you try to combine rock, it tends to break down the machine.

**Mr. McCague:** Rye on the rocks.

**Mr. Wildman:** Rye on the rocks.

I understand the minister has a number of amendments he wishes to put forward. I also have some as well. I am concerned particularly about the controversy that has erupted and I understand there have been recent meetings between the minister and the Ontario Federation of Agriculture and the dealers' association dealing with these concerns, but I am still concerned about section 23, the buyback provisions.

I am concerned because it is difficult to deal with these matters. The way the bill is drafted, they are really going to be set out in the regulations. As I indicated earlier, there was a consensus arrived at among the various players in this matter and then it became a matter of concern that apparently that consensus had somehow broken down. There is concern that the so-called short-line distributor would be exempted. Then the question arises, how do you properly define a short-line distributor? Does the distributor himself define it? If that happens, the distributor will in fact be exempting himself from the provisions of the buyback, which is important, because this is the one section of the bill that assists the dealers in dealing with distributors.



There are a lot of obligations placed on the dealers as well as the distributors in other parts of the act. This buyback section deals with the problems of the dealers in dealing with distributors. It would be most unfortunate if under the regulations a large distributor were able to exempt himself from the provisions of the regulations by simply defining himself as a short-line distributor. What is a short-line distributor? Is it defined in the act or is it going to be defined in the regulations?

Because if we have a situation where a distributor terminates an agreement with a dealer and then moves down the road and makes a sales agreement with another dealer, what protection is there for the dealer who has had his agreement terminated? Surely, that dealer should have a provision where his inventory is purchased back by the distributor to try to ensure that the small operator, the small businessman in the rural community is protected, as well as the farmer.

I am sure farmers do not want to see their friends and neighbours whom they have been doing business with left in the lurch, and I do not have a lot of sympathy for large distributors that are able to say, "We're not producing too many of these," or, "We're not going to be continuing to produce that particular implement," or whatever. Or to say, for whatever reasons, they are dissatisfied with the relationship they have had with one dealer and to terminate and not have to make some redress to the dealer that has been terminated.

In this regard, I am also concerned about the suggestions about the dollar figure for exemption. I know the Ontario Federation of Agriculture would like to see \$1,500 as the figure because, obviously, if someone has purchased a machine or a part that is worth \$1,500, it should be under the legislation.

There has been some suggestion, however, that the exemption figure should be raised to \$5,000, which is a significant investment. I understand there have been discussions today and that there may have been a compromise arrived at which might serve better than the \$5,000. However, I would want to see what that compromise is. I would like to hear from the minister as to what is being proposed, because \$5,000 is just not acceptable.

I know the minister has had correspondence with the president of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture and with the dealers and has had meetings on this. I, frankly, have some problem with some of the comments that the minister has made in this regard. I have a copy of a letter that

was addressed to Brigid Pyke, the president of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, dated October 13, signed by the minister, in which he deals with these concerns. He says in that letter, and I quote, "A buyback requirement where there is not a need to maintain an inventory of either equipment or parts would create an onerous provision for one segment of the industry, short-line distributors, and should not be implemented."

Again, I ask: What is a short-line distributor? But the thing that I am most concerned about in this statement is the phrase, "Where there is not a need to maintain an inventory of either equipment or parts." I would like the minister to explain that. Where is there not a need to maintain an inventory of either equipment or parts, particularly if you are looking at a maximum figure of \$5,000? It seems to me that is not a reasonable statement. We need to have a definition of a short-line distributor and we need to have some rationale for an exemption limit of that high a figure.

I know also, that the Ontario Federation of Agriculture and the dealers have expressed some concern about the registration fees that have been proposed for the regulations. Initially, I understand, they were more in the neighbourhood of \$25. Now what is being proposed is somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$200 for dealers and \$300 for distributors. I will admit this is not a major problem in terms of the legislation and the regulations, but if there was an agreement on a certain figure, why would it be changed without the proper consultation and reaching of a consensus?

## 1720

My main concern, though, is with regard to the buyback. I will be introducing amendments to try to deal with that unless the minister's amendments can be shown to adequately respond to that concern.

I also want to make a couple of other comments about other sections of the bill which I think could use some clarification.

Before entering into a sale agreement, I think the dealer should have to ensure that the date of manufacture of the new implement is clearly marked or stamped on the farm implement in a conspicuous place, and the sale agreement should make clear the date of manufacture.

I would also like to ensure that in the sale of used equipment there is a provision, as with automobiles, that there has been a proper safety check, particularly when we are talking about things like tractors and combines, to ensure that



the implement meets the safety requirements and performance standards which would make it acceptable for sale; and that this should be certified by a person with the qualifications to do that certification. If we do it for automobiles and trucks which are travelling on a public thoroughfare, I do not see why we should not be doing the same thing for a piece of equipment which is going to be used not just in a field or a farm yard but which will also on some occasions be travelling on public thoroughfares.

We all know the record of accidents on the farm, which is not a happy circumstance. I think other members of the House will agree with me that we should be doing all we can to ensure the safety of the farmer, the people who might be employed by the farmer on the farm and also farm families. Too many accidents on the farm do not just involve the farmer himself or his employees, but children.

If we can do anything to ensure a safer operation of a piece of machinery, then we should be doing it here. Why not do it when we are dealing with a bill which deals specifically with the sale of farm implements? If we can require, as part of the sale, a safety check and a certification of safety, I think it should be added to the bill.

With that, I will yield the floor and say in conclusion that this is a matter which has been of special interest to me and I know the minister shares that interest. I do not want to take undue credit, but if in any way the private member's bills I have introduced in the past on this subject have assisted in the drafting of this legislation, then I am very happy to have played a role in finally bringing this matter before the House. I said at the time I introduced my private member's legislation that if the government of the day did not wish to pass my legislation or allow it to pass into second reading and go into law, I would welcome a government bill that incorporated at least some of the provisions of my legislation.

I have never claimed a proprietary interest in this. As a matter of fact, I have made it quite clear that I patterned my bill after legislation that was already in existence in western Canada, and at the time I introduced it, I invited the government to review that legislation and see if it could be applied.

I appreciate the fact that the board has worked on this, in conjunction with the farm organizations and the dealers, and has surveyed the western legislation and come up with legislation for Ontario; legislation which, on the whole, is supportable and I think will go a long way to

improve the availability of parts to ensure that farmers get the machinery, the implements they require, when they require them, and that they are working properly.

As I said, I would like to see some improvements with regard to the controversy over the buyback provisions and the exemptions for the protection of the dealers. I also would like to see some improvements with regard to the certification of safety of equipment at the time of sale and to ensure that the warranties are proper.

With that, I conclude by saying I congratulate the minister for bringing in the legislation. I am happy that we finally got it before the House and I look forward to further discussions in committee of the government's amendments and the amendments that I will be putting forward, as well as amendments which I suspect my friend the member for Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry may be providing.

**Mr. Smith:** I want to make a few comments along those same lines that the member for Algoma has mentioned.

I happen to have been a custom operator in farm equipment, so I agree with some of the things he is saying. It is very important that the farmer has a good relationship with the dealer. If you cannot depend on the dealer to back you up when you go for parts or you go to buy a new piece of equipment, then I guess you can say that your business as a customer operator breaks down and eventually the dealer will break down.

I had the experience about 21 years ago of having bought a piece of equipment and found out through my dealers that, really and truly, it was almost a pile of junk. It had fallen off a transport and I could never figure out why all of the bearings were going out of the machine, so this is what I say: We have to work with this bill and help the dealers so that the manufacturer does not take advantage of them and, in turn, the dealer may have to pass that along to the farmers. In my case, I happen to have been successful to some degree, but I never felt I was ever successful to the amount of money that I felt I had lost in buying that piece of equipment.

I was certainly pleased to hear that the minister has some substantial changes to this bill, because I have got a lot of letters from dealers in my riding of Lambton and they are concerned with this legislation. Maybe as we go through this debate, we will hear more comments from the minister that may help alleviate some of these problems.

**Mr. McGuigan:** I would just like to mention the comments about the warranty period. It says,



"In the case of tractors, the lesser of one year or 1,000 hours of operation."

I guess I am only speaking for southwestern Ontario where you have fairly large tracts of cash crop farming, but with the size of the equipment that we have today, I understand that most of those large tractors only put in about 300 hours a year because of, as I mentioned, the size of them and also we are going to minimum tillage, less tillage than we used to. If you take 1,000 hours of operation, that is really equivalent to about three years of normal field work.

Then you have to consider the case where the farmer uses that tractor as a power unit other than for field work. It might be powering irrigation equipment or grinding equipment or whatever, in which case he could run up to 1,000 hours a year.

1730

As the member for Algoma (Mr. Wildman) mentioned, if you related that to an automobile at 60 miles an hour, that would be 60,000 miles which may seem a fairly small number of miles for a heavy-duty tractor, but you must remember that when your car is going down the road, it is only really working while it is gaining speed. Once it gets up to speed, it is really cruising and the engine is really loping along, whereas a tractor, whatever it is doing, is pretty close to its rated power capacity. So 60,000 miles is not unreasonable, I think, for the amount of guarantee.

There is another thing the member mentioned, the three days for parts. I think today that is not an unreasonable figure. I think the criticism might be that it is too short a time, but when you consider that today most of the manufacturers are connected to dealers with—

**The Acting Speaker:** Order. The member's time has expired.

**Mr. Wildman:** I thank my friends the member for Lambton (Mr. Smith) and the member for Essex-Kent for their comments. I agree completely with the remarks of the member for Lambton that there has to be a good relationship between the dealer and his customer, between the farmer and the dealer, if either of them is to benefit.

I would hope this legislation would enable the dealers to continue in business and to improve their relationship. I would hope that the changes we can bring in with regard to these concerns about buyback can be dealt with, as my friend the member for Lambton indicated.

With regard to my situation in northern Ontario, I agree very much with the comments of the member for Essex-Kent about the length of

time for parts to arrive. Quite often, in northern Ontario, you are dealing with dealers who are not local. You are dealing with dealers who are in Barrie or southwestern Ontario and are shipping the parts to the farmer.

We have had situations in northern Ontario where they do not seem to be too careful about how they ship them. You get a situation where a part is supposed to be going to Sault Ste. Marie and it is shipped to Thunder Bay first and then south from Thunder Bay to Sault Ste. Marie. It just seems to me that if there were a time limit, a requirement that they had to supply the part by a certain length of time, they might be a little more careful.

It also might make it easier for local dealers to operate and to continue in business, because I think it is an important part of our rural community to be able to have local dealers. The comments regarding the length of operation of hours for a tractor I think are useful and helpful and I hope members will support those provisions of the bill.

**Mr. Villeneuve:** It is also a pleasure for me to participate in the debate on Bill 78. At the outset, I can advise this House that I was very fortunate to have been a member of the Ontario Farm Machinery Board for a number of years prior to my incarnation as a member of this venerable assembly. I am pleased to see a former colleague, who was referred to by the member for Algoma, sitting in the members' gallery today.

Back in the early days of the farm machinery board, I think many rather thorny issues were resolved and resolved rather well, at limited expense to both the government of Ontario and to the farmers. We certainly had a great deal of co-operation from industry, from dealers and from the Ministry of Agriculture and Food. Of course, we were there to listen to concerns farmers were having, problems they were having with different items of equipment. By and large, the farm machinery board, without judicial and legal powers, did a remarkable job in making arrangements to try to make things right for all concerned.

Inevitably, Bill 78 had to come. This bill was being formulated back in the days when I was on the board and I think we go back to the early and mid-1980s; I guess 1983 was when I resigned from the board. I certainly think it was high time it be brought to this Legislature. I commend him and thank him for bringing it forth.

I think there are a number of concerns that are expressed here, as would normally be the case. I see where the minister has suggested a number of



fairly minor amendments. We can certainly look at those and discuss them further.

I am concerned about a number of items, as my colleague the member for Algoma was. Subsection 3(4) says, "An agreement between a distributor and a dealer respecting the purchase and sale of a farm implement shall be in writing and shall contain such information as may be prescribed." I just wonder, is there an opting out or is that a must and is that mandatory for everyone? We are led to believe there are ways a dealer and/or distributor may be in a position to opt out on that one. Certainly, I think we should be discussing that one fairly closely prior to enacting Bill 78.

The buyback provisions certainly will be controversial, and until such time as we go through a few experiences, I think probably the buyback provision will be difficult for everyone to understand. Is it universal coverage? Is there some opting out? For some time, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture has been strongly suggesting that a bill to protect farmers and agricultural producers be brought forth, because certainly equipment, outside of the farm itself, is one of the largest capital expenditures a farmer makes, and makes on an ongoing basis, on a productive and progressive agricultural operation.

The Ontario Retail Farm Equipment Dealers' Association has also been very supportive. It was very supportive of the farm machinery board in its present incarnation. It is supportive, as I know it has advised the minister, on most of the items that have been brought forth here in Bill 78. Certain dealers still worry about the inventories, the requirements and indeed the method of enforcing some of the provisions that are within this bill. I think we should air those and discuss them thoroughly prior to enacting Bill 78, so that there are no surprises for dealers, distributors, manufacturers or farmers.

I have a letter of concern here from a short-line farm equipment manufacturer and I will read his concerns in part. "We have reviewed the draft and find it heavily weighted to the advantage of the dealer. There seems to be a campaign by the dealers to put all the blame and responsibility of sales on to the distributor of the equipment rather than assuming a share of the responsibility for the performance of the equipment." This manufacturer refers to a section of the act, "On and after the 90th day after this Act comes into force, a distributor shall not sell a new farm implement to any person except a dealer registered under this Act."

My question pertaining to this concern is, can a manufacturer indeed also be a distributor and/or a dealer or both? We have some short-line equipment manufacturers that are not large operations. They may even be family-sized operations where the building of farm wagons and this type of equipment would be what we are talking about. My question is, can the manufacturer of this equipment be distributor and dealer as well?

As we further discuss this bill, I will be bringing forth some of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture's concerns, as I am sure they were expressed to the minister this morning. I cannot help but go back to a question I put in this Legislature earlier this afternoon when the minister selectively read from the OFA's presentation. With the indulgence of the House, I want to suggest that my question referred to both the Ontario Farm-Start program and the Ontario family farm interest rate reduction program.

**1740**

Certainly as the minister gets into the OFA presentation, all of the great things that he does so capably—and he does it quite well; I must give him credit for that. But I wonder: Some of those people have been told they do not qualify under Farm-Start and may not qualify at all. It was a five-year program, and the OFA is very concerned. The minister did not read their concerns, as they have reported, in their brief to him and the opposition parties, "The OFFIRR Program." I read right from their report: "The OFA requests that the government of Ontario continue to fund the OFFIRR program at 100 per cent of the indicated need."

As the minister knows, he has cut it back by 60 per cent. He is going at only 40 per cent of what he did in a year prior to an election. That is not exactly what the OFA likes to hear. These are some of things the minister failed to read in his answer to some very—

Mr. McGuigan: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I think the member is not addressing the bill. I would point that out and ask that he address the bill.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member for Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry.

**Mr. Villeneuve:** Thank you. I realize that my colleague who has just brought up a point order would rather not hear these things. However, these are very much a fact of life and they affect the agricultural community very directly, as will Bill 78. Bill 78 certainly will afford some degree of additional protection, some degree of protection that is most welcomed by the agricultural



community. I will be looking forward to participating in the clause-by-clause debate of this bill.

**Mr. Smith:** I want to comment again on Bill 78, and the comments the member from Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry has made. I think we have to emphasize and re-emphasize how important it is to help the dealer, I suppose you could almost say, against the manufacturer. As I said earlier on in the debate, if the dealer had not helped me out against the manufacturer, I would never have found out all the reasons my piece of machinery did not happen to work the way it should. I think any way we can help the minister get the appropriate amendments into this act is what we are all striving for.

I have had well over 20 years' experience of custom work, working on the farm with many different pieces of equipment. I can mention, for instance, a combine that costs in the neighbourhood of \$170,000 today with four different heads on it; four different units. I think we have to have these provisions in this bill for buyback, as the word is used. I want to re-emphasize that we have to protect these dealers so that they, in turn, can help the farmers of our many communities in Ontario.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Are there any other comments on the member's statement? If not, would the member wish to respond?

**Mr. Villeneuve:** I also want to thank the member for Lambton. I too have been and still am involved in the business of farming. Yes, farm equipment breaks down at the most inopportune times. However, from my experience as a member of the Ontario Farm Machinery Board I want to tell the member for Lambton that dealers were the ones who were most helpful. They would provide the board with a lot of information that would not otherwise have been available.

They would also provide the board with their opinion as to how the equipment had been used by the farmers, and certainly not all farmers—should I use the term—baby their equipment. Sometimes, when farmers are out there working almost 24 hours a day, areas may be left unchecked or service left undone, waiting for a rainy day. The dealer, who happens to live close by and who provides a lot of the service and a lot of the parts to these farmers, probably knows best what goes on, the type of treatment the equipment is getting.

Certainly this bill is oriented towards the farmer. I have no qualms about that. It if were oriented towards protecting the dealer at the

expense of the farmer, I would certainly not be supporting it, but I think it is a hand-in-glove situation where the farmer needs the dealer, and he needs him really desperately when the equipment is down.

Most dealers do have an excellent electronic computerized system to provide parts, certainly to the central core of Ontario, where distribution is fairly accessible—close to the 401, close to an airport—and certainly we in eastern Ontario have a lot of service from the city of Montreal, so I think dealers do play a very important part. But this bill is for farmers.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Do other members wish to comment or make a speech? If not, would the minister wish to respond?

**Mrs. Marland:** I'd like to make a speech.

**Hon. Mr. Riddell:** I am quite prepared to relinquish my seat if the honourable member wishes to make some comments. I would be interested in getting the urban slant on this whole thing.

I want to thank the honourable members for their general support of this bill. Sure, they have some concerns, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture has some concerns, ORFEDA has some concerns and the short-line distributors have concerns; but I think if we give this bill a chance to work once it has passed into legislation, I think members will find that those concerns will diminish to almost nothing.

One of the major concerns that has been expressed by the Ontario Federation of Agriculture and the Ontario Retail Farm Equipment Dealers' Association was the lack of a buyback provision in the bill, or of an adequate buyback provision, so I have made a commitment to amend the bill to require a distributor to buy back any unused farm equipment no matter which party terminates the agreement. At the appropriate time—and it is when we go into committee—I plan to introduce a motion that will cause this change. I understand that both the dealers' association, ORFEDA, and the representatives for the manufacturers and distributors have agreed with the position that we have taken.

The Ontario Federation of Agriculture's claim—and I think it was alluded to by the official opposition critic, particularly as it relates to buyback—that Bill 78 does not faithfully translate the agreement reached by industry, dealer, wholesale and farm groups is incorrect. In fact, when the bill is amended, the buyback section will be the same as the original section that was agreed to by the above groups on August 21, 1987.



That brings us to the concern that my official opposition critic had with exempting short-line distributors, and one of the things he asked was, "How do you define a short-line distributor?"

Well, there is no legal definition in the act or in practice for a short-line distributor, but it is a term that refers to small manufacturers, distributors, who do not have franchise arrangements and usually sell equipment that large manufacturers do not provide.

I will admit that both the Ontario Federation of Agriculture and ORFEDA have requested that the buyback provisions be extended to cover all dealer-distributor arrangements, including ones where a dealer is not required to maintain inventory.

I find it of interest that in a survey done by ORFEDA in June 1988, 24 of 34 jurisdictions had buyback legislation similar to that found in our Bill 78. In other words, a buyback would only be possible where there was a requirement to maintain inventory. I am unaware of any problems faced by dealers in these areas. Dealers have an easy solution to their concern. In any purchase and sale with a distributor, they only have to state on the invoice that the buyback provisions of the act apply. Then, by law, they would have the protection they need and yet retain some flexibility where they are only making one purchase.

**1750**

I believe the critic for the Conservative Party expressed the same concerns that I have about including short-line distributors under this buyback provision of the act. I also have a letter here from what we call a short-line distributor and I am going to read part of it.

"Operating as a small business, I and my family have to assign receivables, inventory, as well as personally guarantee our bank revolving lines of credit exactly the same way as a farmer has to. Short-line suppliers should not be confused with multinational main-liners. If our bank were to realize our receivables were subject to buybacks, just because a retailer has not sold it, my borrowing power could be reduced by as much as 30 to 40 per cent, which in turn would reflect reduced inventory in wholegoods and parts, as well as service. Short-line wholesale distributors have no muscle to make a retailer buy or stock wholegoods or parts; therefore, if our sales programs do not compel, why should we accept buybacks under the proposed legislation in Bill 78?"

"For 20 years, we have traded and exchanged wholegoods for other wholegoods. If Bill 78

were accepted in its original context, tremendous pressures would be put on short-line wholesale distributors and, in my opinion, the agricultural industry would suffer.

"Aside from internal combustion engines, most new innovative ideas originate either with a farmer or in a small welding shop and these ideas are, in turn, marketed through a short-line distributor. Our small wholesale distributorships help to promote and finance products totalling millions of dollars each and every year to agricultural retailers and farmers.

"I cannot believe the Ontario Federation of Agriculture would wish to disturb this delicate balance. It is my belief this industry is too small to have an attitude of 'us and them.' There is no question that in years gone by there have been massive abuses in the agricultural industry. It is my belief Bill 78 was really not designed to envelop the short-liner and multinational supplier under the same legislation."

I have a lot of concerns about including the short-liner under the provisions of the buyback agreement in this particular legislation.

I could go on and quote other examples of where some of these short-line distributors—maybe using an extreme case—could perhaps be put out of business if they were to be included under the buyback provision. I do not think anyone in this House wants to see the Minister of Agriculture and Food bring in legislation that may put out of business those very people we need, the ones who quite often come up with the ideas that very often are stolen by the large equipment manufacturers.

A lot of these good ideas start from the farmer himself or from some person out there in rural Ontario operating a little welding shop and he comes up with a better cultivator or a better snowblower or a better set of chain harrows than the larger manufacturers can come up with.

I made it abundantly plain this morning when I was talking to the OFA, the Ontario Retail Farm Equipment Dealers' Association and the short-line distributors that this Minister of Agriculture and Food was not going to be introducing legislation which would have the tendency to put out of business the very people we need in the equipment business.

Some other minor points were mentioned. I do not know whether the official opposition considers \$5,000 to be really a minor issue in this bill.

**Mr. Wildman:** I said the fees were minor.

**Hon. Mr. Riddell:** Okay. Let's deal with the \$5,000. If I could buy a tractor today for the price I could buy it in the mid-1970s, I would go out of



this House with the greatest smile on my face you have ever seen. We all have to admit that costs have risen dramatically since the time we first brought in the farm machinery code of practice and what not. I do not think \$5,000 is out of the way, but I am going to say that we can adjust this by regulation. As I indicated this morning to the group, if I think \$3,500 is a better figure, I will make it \$3,500. We can change it. There is no problem in changing that because that is addressed through regulations.

The registration fees I consider to be a minor matter too. I do not think any retailer is going to kick up much of a fuss about having to pay a \$200 registration fee. Our administration costs will likely exceed \$200. We have come to the point where we have to start to recover some of our costs in some of these programs we have.

We have been doing lab tests for cats and dogs and pet lovers and what not; if the cat got a bit of a tickle in its stomach and all the rest of it, we have been paying for it. I am not too sure we should continue to do that. I think we should be striving to recover some of our cost, and that is exactly what I am going to do. That is why this registration fee is going to stay at \$200.

Mr. Speaker, I see—

**The Deputy Speaker:** There is slightly less than three minutes left.

**Hon. Mr. Riddell:** To deal with the concern of the Conservative Party critic, there have to be written contracts. I cannot believe, in today's age, that any kind of agreement would be carried on unless it were a written agreement. When you

are dealing with thousands and thousands of dollars' worth of equipment, the day of doing it with a handshake is over. I wish it were still here. I wish we could still get by with doing our figuring on the medicine chest in the horse stable, or that my friend and I could agree to something with a handshake. I have to say that does not stand up in the courts today. I cannot believe any business person would want to carry on business without having a written agreement.

There is no opting out in this legislation. If members take a look at subsection 23(3), it very specifically says there is no contracting or opting out unless the buyback provisions are more favourable to the dealer. I would ask members to look over that section because we will be coming back to this, obviously; it is going to go into committee, and I have some amendments to make.

It being six of the clock, I will move adjournment of the debate.

**Hon. Mr. Conway:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I am anxious to move this along. I do not know whether the House is ready. If the minister wishes to take the vote on second reading, he might do so.

**Hon. Mr. Riddell:** I am prepared to take a vote on second reading.

Motion agreed to.

Bill ordered for standing committee on resources development.

The House adjourned at 6 p.m.



# ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS\*

(130 seats)

First Session, 34th Parliament

**Lieutenant Governor: Hon. Lincoln M. Alexander, PC, QC**

- 
- |   |  |
|---|--|
| Adams, Peter (Peterborough L)   | <b>Fontaine, Hon. René</b> , Minister of Northern Development (Cochrane North L)           |
| Allen, Richard (Hamilton West NDP)  | <b>Fulton, Hon. Ed</b> , Minister of Transportation (Scarborough East L)                   |
| Ballinger, William G. (Durham-York L)   | Furlong, Allan W. (Durham Centre L)  |
| Beer, Charles (York North L)  | <b>Grandmaitre, Hon. Bernard C.</b> , Minister of Revenue (Ottawa East L)                  |
| Black, Kenneth H. (Muskoka-Georgian Bay L)  | Grier, Ruth A. (Etobicoke-Lakeshore NDP)   |
| Bossy, Maurice L. (Chatham-Kent L)  | Haggerty, Ray (Niagara South L)  |
| <b>Bradley, Hon. James J.</b> , Minister of the Environment (St. Catharines L)        | Hampton, Howard (Rainy River NDP)  |
| Brandt, Andrew S. (Sarnia PC)   | Harris, Michael D. (Nipissing PC)  |
| Breaugh, Michael J. (Oshawa NDP)  | Hart, Christine E. (York East L)   |
| Brown, Michael A. (Algoma-Manitoulin L)   | Henderson, D. James (Etobicoke-Humber L)   |
| Bryden, Marion (Beaches-Woodbine NDP)   | <b>Hošek, Hon. Chaviva</b> , Minister of Housing (Oakwood L)                               |
| Callahan, Robert V. (Brampton South L)  | Jackson, Cameron (Burlington South PC)   |
| Campbell, Sterling (Sudbury L)  | Johnson, Jack (Wellington PC)  |
| <b>Caplan, Hon. Elinor</b> , Minister of Health (Oriole L)                            | Johnston, Richard F. (Scarborough West NDP)  |
| Carrothers, Douglas A. (Oakville South L)   | Kanter, Ron (St. Andrew-St. Patrick L)   |
| Charlton, Brian A. (Hamilton Mountain NDP)  | <b>Kerrio, Hon. Vincent G.</b> , Minister of Natural Resources (Niagara Falls L)           |
| Chiarelli, Robert (Ottawa West L)   | Keyes, Kenneth A. (Kingston and The Islands L)   |
| Cleary, John C. (Cornwall L)  | Kormos, Peter (Welland-Thorold NDP)  |
| Collins, Shirley (Wentworth East L)   | Kozyra, Taras B. (Port Arthur L)   |
| <b>Conway, Hon. Sean G.</b> , Minister of Mines (Renfrew North L)                     | <b>Kwinter, Hon. Monte</b> , Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Wilson Heights L) |
| Cooke, David R. (Kitchener L)   | Laughren, Floyd (Nickel Belt NDP)  |
| Cooke, David S. (Windsor-Riverside NDP)   | LeBourdais, Linda (Etobicoke West L)   |
| Cordiano, Joseph (Lawrence L)   | Leone, Laureano (Downsview L)  |
| Cousens, W. Donald (Markham PC)   | Lipsett, Ron (Grey L)  |
| Cunningham, Dianne E. (London North PC)   | Lupusella, Tony (Dovercourt L)   |
| Cureatz, Sam L. (Durham East PC)  | MacDonald, Keith (Prince Edward-Lennox L)  |
| <b>Curling, Hon. Alvin</b> , Minister of Skills Development (Scarborough North L)     | Mackenzie, Bob (Hamilton East NDP)   |
| Daigeler, Hans (Nepean L)   | Mahoney, Steven W. (Mississauga West L)  |
| Dietsch, Michael M. (St. Catharines-Brock L)  | <b>Mancini, Hon. Remo</b> , Minister without Portfolio (Essex South L)                     |
| <b>Eakins, Hon. John F.</b> , Minister of Municipal Affairs (Victoria-Haliburton L)   | Marland, Margaret (Mississauga South PC)   |
| <b>Edighoffer, Hon. Hugh A.</b> , Speaker (Perth L)                                   | Martel, Shelley (Sudbury East NDP)   |
| Elliot, R. Walter (Halton North L)  | Matrundola, Gino (Willowdale L)  |
| <b>Elston, Hon. Murray J.</b> , Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet (Bruce L) | McCague, George R. (Simcoe West PC)  |
| Epp, Herbert A. (Waterloo North L)  | McClelland, Carman (Brampton North L)  |
| Eves, Ernie L. (Parry Sound PC)   | McGuigan, James F. (Essex-Kent L)  |
| Farnan, Michael (Cambridge NDP)   | McGuinty, Dalton J. (Ottawa South L)   |
| Faubert, Frank (Scarborough-Ellesmere L)  | McLean, Allan K. (Simcoe East PC)  |
| Fawcett, Joan M. (Northumberland L)   | <b>McLeod, Hon. Lyn</b> , Minister of Colleges and Universities (Fort William L)           |
| Ferraro, Rick E. (Guelph L)   | Miclash, Frank (Kenora L)  |
| Fleet, David (High Park-Swansea L)  |  |



Miller, Gordon I. (Norfolk L)  
 Morin, Gilles E. (Carleton East L)  
 Morin-Strom, Karl E. (Sault Ste. Marie NDP)  
 Neumann, David E. (Brantford L)  
 Nicholas, Cindy (Scarborough Centre L)  
 Nixon, J. Bradford (York Mills L)  
**Nixon, Hon. Robert F.**, Deputy Premier,  
 Treasurer of Ontario and Minister of Eco-  
 nomics and Minister of Financial Institutions  
 (Brant-Haldimand L)  
**Oddie Munro, Hon. Lily**, Minister of Culture  
 and Communications (Hamilton Centre L)  
 Offer, Steven (Mississauga North L)  
**O'Neil, Hon. Hugh P.**, Minister of Tourism and  
 Recreation (Quinte L)  
 O'Neill, Yvonne (Ottawa-Rideau L)  
 Owen, Bruce (Simcoe Centre L)  
**Patten, Hon. Richard**, Minister of Government  
 Services (Ottawa Centre L)  
 Pelissero, Harry E. (Lincoln L)  
**Peterson, Hon. David R.**, Premier and Presi-  
 dent of the Council and Minister of Inter-  
 governmental Affairs (London Centre L)  
 Philip, Ed (Etobicoke-Rexdale NDP)  
**Phillips, Hon. Gerry**, Minister of Citizenship  
 (Scarborough-Agincourt L)  
 Poirier, Jean, Deputy Speaker and Chairman of  
 the Committees of the Whole House (Prescott  
 and Russell L)  
 Pollock, Jim (Hastings-Peterborough PC)  
 Polsinelli, Claudio (Yorkview L)  
 Poole, Dianne (Eglinton L)  
 Pope, Alan W. (Cochrane South PC)  
 Pouliot, Gilles (Lake Nipigon NDP)  
 Rae, Bob (York South NDP)  
**Ramsay, Hon. David**, Minister of Correctional  
 Services (Timiskaming L)  
 Ray, Michael C., Deputy Chairman of the  
 Committees of the Whole House (Windsor-  
 Walkerville L)  
 Reville, David (Riverdale NDP)  
 Reycraft, Douglas R. (Middlesex L)

**Riddell, Hon. Jack**, Minister of Agriculture and  
 Food (Huron L)  
 Roberts, Marietta L. D. (Elgin L)  
 Runciman, Robert W. (Leeds-Grenville PC)  
 Ruprecht, Tony (Parkdale L)  
**Scott, Hon. Ian G.**, Attorney General  
 (St. George-St. David L)  
 Smith, David W. (Lambton L)  
**Smith, Hon. E. Joan**, Solicitor General  
 (London South L)  
 Sola, John (Mississauga East L)  
**Sorbara, Hon. Gregory S.**, Minister of Labour  
 (York Centre L)  
 South, Larry (Frontenac-Addington L)  
 Sterling, Norman W. (Carleton PC)  
 Stoner, Norah (Durham West L)  
 Sullivan, Barbara (Halton Centre L)  
**Sweeney, Hon. John**, Minister of Community  
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 Tatham, Charlie (Oxford L)  
 Velshi, Murad (Don Mills L)  
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 garry PC)  
**Ward, Hon. Christopher C.**, Minister of  
 Education (Wentworth North L)  
 Wildman, Bud (Algoma NDP)  
**Wilson, Hon. Mavis**, Minister without Portfolio  
 (Dufferin-Peel L)  
 Wiseman, Douglas J. (Lanark-Renfrew PC)  
**Wong, Hon. Robert C.**, Minister of Energy  
 (Fort York L)  
**Wrye, Hon. William**, Minister of Consumer and  
 Commercial Relations (Windsor-Sandwich L)

\*The alphabetical list of members appears in each issue. Lists of the members of the executive council, parliamentary assistants and members of committees, brought up to date as necessary, are published in Hansard in the first and last issues of each session and on the first sitting day of each month.

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# Hansard

## Official Report of Debates

### Legislative Assembly of Ontario



**First Session, 34th Parliament**  
Wednesday, November 16, 1988

Speaker: Honourable Hugh A. Edighoffer  
Clerk of the House: Claude L. DesRosiers

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Contents of the proceedings reported in this issue of Hansard appears at the back, together with an alphabetical list of members of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Wednesday, November 16, 1988

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayers.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### ELECTION OF REGIONAL CHAIRMAN

**Mr. Mackenzie:** Two years ago my colleague the member for Hamilton West (Mr. Allen), in response to widespread community demand, moved a private member's bill to enable the citizens of Hamilton-Wentworth to freely elect their regional chairperson. My colleague and members of the NDP caucus continued to press the government of Ontario to adopt this more democratic approach to make the decision about who should be the chairperson, one made by all of the people and not just a privileged few. The government got the message and brought forward its own bill about a year ago which established the right to an election.

The result of this bill was the first election of a regional chairperson for Hamilton-Wentworth this Monday past. Five well-known citizens of our region contested this position. Reg Whynott was the successful candidate and will take over the position held by the retiring Bill Sears.

Perseverance by the member for Hamilton West and others paid off. The election process worked. We hope the new chairman, Reg Whynott, will use his authority wisely and we wish him well in his new job.

### CHEQUES FOR ONTARIO SCHOLARS

**Mr. McCague:** I think all members of this House have been invited to attend the commencement exercises in their schools over the past month or so. In each case, the cheques from the government were not available for the students. It is my understanding that the government has known for four months who the Ontario scholars were. I was interested to note that the member for Simcoe Centre (Mr. Owen) had to make the apologies of the government for not having the cheques available at that particular time.

**Mr. Reycraft:** They're in the mail.

**Mr. McCague:** No, they are not in the mail, because they are not there yet. If my friend wants to take the blame, he should speak up again.

However, I was able to point out to the people in my riding that prior to 1985 the cheques were always there on time, and that was probably the best joke anybody could tell at that particular time.

**Mr. Black:** That's because all the money you were spending on education was on those cheques.

**Mr. McCague:** The member for Muskoka-Georgian Bay does not know what he is talking about. The same thing happened to my colleague the member for Simcoe Centre, as I have said. It is scandalous. They should be out in time. They had four months' notice.

### HOSPITAL FUNDING

**Mr. Cleary:** Our government has heard many complaints from the opposition members who seem to spend their time searching for negative stories about our health care system. There should always be an element of self-help attached to any community service. A community which is spoon-fed becomes unproductive.

In my Cornwall area riding, the people are presently engaged in a self-help program with their hospitals. The Cornwall hospitals need a total of \$24,818,000 for the building program. Our provincial government agreed to provide \$16,418,000. The hospitals are giving \$3.9 million. The city of Cornwall and the united counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry contributed \$2.5 million. This left \$2 million to be raised by the community.

Rather than cry about the need for additional moneys, the people of Cornwall and area established a joint hospital fund, determining to make up the difference. They are doing this with good heart, having fun, and even welding a tighter community spirit in the process. To date, the Cornwall joint hospital fund has raised \$1.8 million, and the balance of \$200,000 will soon be obtained.

I am very proud of the constituents of my riding. Instead of complaining about the \$2-million difference, the people of Cornwall and area faced the challenge head-on and overcame it.

## AIR QUALITY

**Mr. Laughren:** On June 7, I wrote the following letter to the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley):

"Dear Mr. Minister:

"Several times every year when the weather is dry and the wind is blowing, Inco's tailings are lifted by the wind and blown across the surrounding area. The blowing tailings are so thick that motorists must drive with their lights on. The tailings are blown into people's homes and cars and, of course, on to the vegetation and into the local lakes and creeks.

"Inco's response is always one of concern and an offer to pay for any damage caused by the tailings. There is, however, no way to assess the environmental damage nor to estimate what tourists think of Sudbury when they have to turn on their lights on an otherwise bright, sunny day.

"More than 10 years ago, Inco was given permission to expand their tailings area, and they agreed to control the problem of blowing tailings which they have not done.

"I can assure you that if the blowing of tailings occurred in southern Ontario as it did in Sudbury on June 5, you as the Minister of the Environment would be turning cartwheels in order to resolve the problem.

"Every single time I raise the matter with the Ministry of the Environment and with Inco, I am told that everything possible is being done. Hogwash!

"It is time that you, as minister, took an interest in this problem. I, for one, have had enough excuses from Inco and please, don't play the role of Inco apologist again."

That letter was written to the Minister of the Environment on June 7 of this year. To this date there still has not been a reply.

## SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

**Mr. Harris:** I have a couple of paragraphs in a letter that I thought the Premier (Mr. Peterson) and the cabinet would be interested in hearing.

"First, why is it that a woman on mother's allowance has to pay through the nose to go to college? Example: Four years of college cost \$14,000 in loan plus \$8,000 interest, leaving me with a loan payment of \$206 per month for the next 10 years. Once I manage to find employment I have this to look forward to. If, on the other hand, I was the daughter of someone on mother's allowance, I would have virtually little to repay in the way of a loan. Why this discrimination? We are both in the same financial situation. Can you explain this to me?"

She goes on in another paragraph: "Secondly, why are all the government programs geared to the young? Do you not realize this only encourages them to drop out of school. What do you have for someone like myself? I am 37. Absolutely nothing!"

She goes on in another paragraph: "Upset, frustrated? Most definitely. If the government would be more sympathetic to the single parents there would not be so many of us requiring assistance financially or up to our necks in debts because we are only trying to better ourselves and get on with our lives at a decent standard of living.

"I would appreciate hearing from you on these issues. It might not seem of great importance to you, but it is to a larger number of people than you are aware of."

This is a letter from Linda Remmerswaal in North Bay. I will be sending this letter to the Premier and to those ministers responsible and suggesting to them that there is a lot of truth in what this young lady says.

1340

## ARTURO VIOLA

**Mr. Dietsch:** I would like to take this opportunity to bring to the attention of this House the recent recognition of an outstanding individual within my riding.

On November 11, Arturo Viola received the Citizen of the Year award from the Niagara-on-the-Lake Chamber of Commerce for his tireless contributions to the community.

Mr. Viola, the director of laboratories for the Niagara-on-the-Lake General Hospital, became a Canadian citizen in 1973 and has resided in the Niagara area for 17 years. During this time, Art has had extensive involvement in the Niagara Lions Club, serving as both the district and zone chairman, as well as receiving the president's and secretary's attendance award.

Art has been equally involved with other community organizations and causes, such as fund-raising for the diabetes awareness program, the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario and the Jeremy Remple Night.

His overwhelming commitment can also be seen in the areas of work surrounding the Jocelyn Muir Ontario Lake Swimathon for Multiple Sclerosis, the Olympic torch relay and his active involvement in minor sports, church programs and the Filipino Association of Niagara.

I ask that each member of this House join with me in the warmest congratulations to this outstanding citizen, who has dedicated much of



his time and knowledge to make Niagara a better place in which to live in this province of Ontario.

### STATEMENT BY THE MINISTRY

#### ANNUAL REPORT, ONTARIO ADVISORY COUNCIL ON SENIOR CITIZENS

**Hon. Mrs. Wilson:** Today I am tabling the 14th annual report of the Ontario Advisory Council on Senior Citizens.

The advisory council comprises 16 citizens from across the province. Its role is to advise the government of Ontario, through my office, on matters concerning the wellbeing of seniors in our province.

To that end, during the 1987-88 fiscal year, the council met with various ministries on issues such as the legislative review of consumer legislation and the Ontario Building Code. In addition, at a two-day public consultation meeting in Windsor, the council discussed a wide range of issues, including health, social services and transportation.

During the coming year, the council will be examining attitudes towards ageing in Ontario's multicultural environment in order to identify those issues that must be addressed if all our senior citizens, whatever their heritage, are to live full and rewarding lives.

I want to thank the council for sharing its valuable ideas with me. I want to express my personal thanks to the council members and staff, and I commend this annual report to all members of the House.

In closing, I would like the members to welcome Ivy St. Lawrence, chairman of the Ontario Advisory Council on Senior Citizens, who is with us in the gallery today. Since her appointment in March 1983, Ivy St. Lawrence has been a tireless advocate for Ontario's seniors. On behalf of all members of this Legislature, I thank her for her efforts and her counsel.

### RESPONSES

#### ANNUAL REPORT, ONTARIO ADVISORY COUNCIL ON SENIOR CITIZENS

**Mr. Reville:** On behalf of the New Democratic Party, I would like to extend our thanks to Ivy St. Lawrence, whom I know as a tireless worker at the city level as well as at the provincial level. There is no question that her advice and her energy are very valuable and much prized by all of us.

I cannot imagine the delight with which the council discussed the Ontario Building Code. I mean, it must have been a really interesting

exercise for seniors in the province to discuss the building code. I cannot imagine a more arcane set of regulations to be debated.

I notice in the report that the advisory council did get into some very important issues that are important to seniors and to this party. There is a whole section on the financial affairs of seniors, which deals with such critical issues as tax reform, survivor benefits under the Canada pension plan, financial planning, telephone services, the Cemeteries Act and advocacy.

There is nothing in here that I can see immediately about pensions, and I think seniors across this province have spoken out very clearly about the pressing need for advancements in the policy and planning around people's pensions. I think the government should be ashamed of itself that it has not moved forward with more alacrity in that area.

That said, we welcome again the annual report of the seniors' advisory council. Our party is committed to working towards the day when seniors are not required to live in poverty in a province of such wealth as this.

**Mr. Cousens:** We are delighted that Ivy St. Lawrence continues to make this thing work and continues to draw out good advice so that the ministry at least has some guidance on matters.

I am glad that the government is continuing the activity of having a senior citizens' portfolio, which the Honourable Frank Miller started and which this government was able to inaugurate. There was recognition then, and no one has any hold on sincerity. In fact, every one of us in this House had better realize that if we live long enough we will be seniors, except for maybe the Treasurer (Mr. R. F. Nixon) and a few others who are already there.

**Hon. Mr. Nixon:** I am not.

**Mr. Cousens:** He is a senior member of the House.

It is rather startling, just on one little point, that this becomes a major announcement in the Legislature that the government is continuing to do something on seniors. I would have taken this for granted. We have the Minister without Portfolio responsible for senior citizens' affairs (Mrs. Wilson) working day and night for seniors, and yet we have to come along and have another presentation in the House.

This is probably one of the reasons that the Legislature is going to have to sit extra weeks in the year, because we end up having reports and members of the opposition have to comment on them. We would be far better to get dealing with some—

**Mr. Adams:** Sit down; you don't have to comment.

**Mr. Cousens:** Oh no, I am going to comment because I want to go on record, along with them, saying that I believe in seniors too, that I want to do everything I can for seniors, that our party believes in seniors and that we ourselves are committed to make sure action comes out of this.

It is one thing to have all this advice from the Ontario advisory council; it is another thing to start implementing some of the programs that the advisory council has been asking for in the last several years. It is time we started to do more for seniors and not just talk about seniors, and that is the emphasis I want to make.

The minister has the advice. Let's stop having more advice and more advice; let's come along and get those other ministries that she has to work with to listen to her. I think she is doing a super job in very many ways, except it is, "Oh, sure I will," but where is the Ministry of Community and Social Services, where is the Ministry of Health and where is the Ministry of Transportation when it comes to the minister's implementing things for seniors? They are not giving her the co-operation she needs.

I think her ministry needs more power and more clout and more authority and the Treasurer should be giving that to her.

Let's just get on with it. We have had enough advice. It is time for action.

**Mrs. Cunningham:** I too would like to make some comments on the annual report of the Ontario Advisory Council on Senior Citizens. I commend the minister on the report and the sharing of information with her, because it is very timely that I met with the Multicultural Work Group on Social Assistance this morning. They have a number of recommendations that do affect our senior citizens.

I am very glad that during the coming year, the council will be examining attitudes towards ageing in Ontario's multicultural environment. Our party is most interested in meeting their concerns and dealing with their recommendations.

I would also like to take the opportunity to speak to pages 18 and 19 of the report, specifically on the integrated homemaker program. I am happy that is a priority of the council. There are many recommendations that we should be looking at and we will be waiting to hear from the government on that particular topic.

The other issue for seniors is the dental care issue. We are waiting again to hear from the

government on its election promises with regard to dental care and hearing-related issues.

Pages 18 and 19 of the report are priorities for ourselves. We urge the minister to make them priorities for herself as she looks at the needs of senior citizens in Ontario in the next few months.

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## ORAL QUESTIONS

### OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

**Mr. Mackenzie:** I have a question for the Minister of Labour. Has the minister read the letters sent to employees of Libbey Owens Ford in Lindsay, which read as follows:

"After completing detailed medical examinations required by Ministry of Labour regulations, Dr. Brown and Dr. Doak have determined that you are medically unfit for work in isocyanates exposure as defined by those regulations.

"Based on these medical findings, your employment with Libbey Owens Ford Co. will be terminated, effective immediately. Your pay will continue through November 11...at your regular hourly rate for 40 hours per week. Your medical benefits will be continued through the end of November. This will give you further opportunity to find alternative employment, and I wish you well in this endeavour."

It is signed by the plant manager. Does the minister accept this almost unbelievable action in the year of our Lord 1988?

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** I want simply to tell my friend the member for Hamilton East that I had not read that particular letter, but I certainly am aware of the circumstances at Libbey Owens Ford.

The member for Hamilton East is referring to a situation where a number of employees at the Libbey Owens Ford glass facility in Lindsay have developed a sensitivity to isocyanates, and as a result of that sensitivity and a determination that they ought not to work any further in an environment where that sensitivity might be enhanced, the employer has terminated them.

I really question whether those terminations were appropriate. I note in passing that in Bill 162, which is now under second reading debate in this House, where workers who have developed this sort of industrial disease have become ready to go back to work, there is a requirement under a provision of that bill that the employer rehire those injured workers.

**Mr. Mackenzie:** I find the minister's response not dealing specifically with the problem and unbelievable. This company is blatantly saying,



"After we make you sick for life, we fire you with no further responsibility on our part." Workers are clearly being asked to make a choice between their jobs and their health, a direct violation, I think, of section 24 of the act.

If ever there was a justified call for government action, this is it. What is the minister going to do in this case?

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** I just want to make it clear to my friend from Hamilton East that we have had inspectors from the health services and safety branch of the ministry and other representatives from the industrial health and safety branch at this facility for quite some time.

The reason, as explained to our officials, that these employees have been terminated is that it appears at this point—and I emphasize, at this point—that there is no place in that facility which would not heighten the sensitivity of these workers to isocyanates. Isocyanates are very volatile substances and it has been deemed on the company's part that further potential exposure would do further damage to the health of these workers.

I will tell the member—

**Mr. R. F. Johnston:** The other day you said the plant was clean.

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** If the member for Scarborough West will just stop shouting for a moment, I will tell the member for Hamilton East that the question as to whether these terminations represent a reprisal for workers having raised occupational health and safety issues remains outstanding. The question of reprisals will be determined either by way of a grievance under the collective agreement, because this plant is organized and the workers are represented, or by way of an action before the Ontario Labour Relations Board.

I am not sure what the member for Hamilton East is suggesting—that somehow the Minister of Labour intervene?

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. Final supplementary.

**Mr. Mackenzie:** I really am trying to keep my cool with the minister and I cannot believe what I am hearing. Is he aware that workers working there in that plant to this day who have been notified by their own doctors that they may be sensitized are afraid to be reported to the company, because they would lose a needed job? Is he also aware that medical examinations at this plant this past summer found 23 employees who were partially or likely sensitized and 132 more who probably should not be working in that

facility? It begs just exactly what the inspectors are doing. If the minister does not have an immediate response to what is going on in that plant and this particular situation, then he has clearly turned his back on workers in Ontario.

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** I think it is important to let my friend the member for Hamilton East know that our inspectors are there to ensure that in no place in that facility are isocyanates present beyond the values established by regulation recently passed by this government under authority of the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

I want to tell him as well that the Workers' Compensation Board has made it a priority matter to determine whether claims are appropriate in these circumstances, and that determination will be made in the very near future.

I just want to end by saying that these issues and appropriate compensation for these workers under Bill 162, our reforms to the Workers' Compensation Board, would provide immediate and full compensation to these workers for all the time they would be off work. I encourage him to think about that as we continue debate on Bill 162 in this House.

#### SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** I have a question for the gatekeeper of lists in Ontario, the Minister of Community and Social Services, who said yesterday, in response to my leader: "The honourable member is correct when he says there are waiting lists for day care, but he would be equally correct if he said there are waiting lists for services to the elderly, waiting lists for services to the disabled and waiting lists with respect to family violence. There are waiting lists in all of the services we offer."

We concur with that statement the minister made, and I would like to just run through briefly and ask for the minister's response to some of the waiting lists that exist in his ministry. Is the minister aware that there are 2,500 people waiting right now for admission to his homes for the aged, with a waiting period of up to 12 months; that there are right now 98 people on the waiting list for Ontario March of Dimes, and they closed off that waiting list because the people are waiting up to three years for service for attendant care? Is the minister aware that in Sudbury there are 168 qualified referrals for vocational rehabilitation, with a waiting list of nearly seven and a half months; in services for family violence, that in Ontario there are two people turned away for every one—



**Mr. Speaker:** Order. Would the member take his seat? There seemed to be quite a number of questions there.

**Hon. Mr. Sweeney:** The honourable member is correct that there are the kinds of waiting lists he is talking about. I said that yesterday. I said it in the context of indicating that the total resources available to my ministry and to all ministries of government are limited. It is our responsibility to allocate those resources across the full range of programs we have. We cannot concentrate all of our resources on any one program. I do not see any contradiction there.

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** It is the responsibility of the Minister of Community and Social Services to serve the most vulnerable people in this province, and that is what these programs are supposed to do. How can the minister possibly say he is doing his job and his ministry is doing its job when in fact, in many of these services, there are more people on waiting lists than he is even serving? What is he prepared to do to provide these services, or is he just going to throw his hands up in the air, as the Minister of Labour (Mr. Sorbara) did a couple of minutes ago, and say there is nothing he can do at all?

**Hon. Mr. Sweeney:** I am not suggesting there is nothing we could do at all. I have to challenge the member's statement that there are more people on waiting lists than are being served. I just do not think that is valid.

The other thing I would draw to the member's attention is that in every one of those areas I mentioned yesterday and he mentioned today, there have been very significant rates of growth. There have been significant rates of growth in terms of extra beds in homes for the aged. There have been significant rates of growth in home support programs for the elderly and for the disabled. There have been significant rates of growth in additional programs for vocational rehabilitation. There have been significant rates of growth in community programs for the developmentally handicapped. There have been significant rates of growth in our children's mental health centres. There have been significant rates of growth in our family violence programs. There have been significant rates—

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**Mr. R. F. Johnston:** How many beds?

**Hon. Mr. Sweeney:** We have gone from \$7 million to \$26 million in family violence alone.

Interjections.

**Hon. Mr. Scott:** You're the Simon Reisman of the NDP.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. We will just wait once again; if you will allow the member for Windsor-Riverside may ask a supplementary.

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** I do not know how the minister can defend the waiting lists that he has with these very vulnerable people. I would like to ask him specifically, on services to people who are from violent families, how can he possibly say he is doing a decent job in that area when, in fact, two people are being turned away across the province for every one who is served? In Metropolitan Toronto the statistic is that for every one request, nine are turned away.

The minister will understand that there have not been new beds put in place. A lot of money has been spent on advertising and promotion, but nothing in terms of actual extra services to the people of this province. I think it would be a fair accusation to say that the minister is a traitor to the people he is supposed to be serving.

**Hon. Mr. Scott:** You're the Simon Reisman.

**Mr. Pouliot:** Come on, there are only five days to go.

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**Hon. Mr. Sweeney:** The member is wrong with respect to the growth in services in family violence. In 1985, when we took over, the total budget for family violence was \$6.9 million. It is now \$26.2 million. The total budget for transition houses has gone from \$5.9 million to \$17.2 million. We have introduced for the first time a community counselling preventive program at a cost of \$3 million, a child support service workers' program at a cost of \$2.3 million, an emergency transportation program at a cost of \$540,000, a crisis telephone program at a cost of \$424,000. None of those programs were there before. All the advocacy groups for family violence said that that is precisely what we should be doing, and we have done it.

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. I would ask all members to show a little respect. New question, the member for Sarnia.

[Applause]

#### PAY EQUITY IN HOSPITALS

**Mr. Brandt:** Let the record show that there was tremendous applause from the Liberal benches and overwhelming applause from the Conservative benches as well, Mr. Speaker. I want to address my question to the Minister of Health.



The Minister of Health will be aware that, approximately a year from now, there will be a requirement in all hospitals in Ontario to implement the pay equity laws of this province, which were in fact put in place by the Attorney General (Mr. Scott) some two years ago through the positions that he put before the justice committee. At the time of those presentations, an assistant to the Attorney General indicated that the cost of those programs would in fact have to be recognized in transfer grants from the province to the hospitals in order to make up that funding deficit. Over a period of four to five years, the cost of that program, we estimate, will be in the range of \$115 million.

Is it the minister's intention to transfer that money to the hospitals in order that they can implement the necessary pay equity programs, programs that we feel the nurses are justified in receiving? Is that her intention?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** I am pleased to have a question from the leader of the third party on pay equity, because in fact one of the great accomplishments of this government, I think, has been to enact one of the most proactive pieces of legislation in North America.

There are many challenges for us as we move forward with this landmark legislation. We are working closely with many sectors to assist them. We have established the Pay Equity Commission, and I am confident that we will be successful in seeing this legislation implemented as it was intended to be.

[Applause]

**Mr. Brandt:** It was the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Kerrio) who applauded that absolutely ridiculous answer. The question was very specific. There is no one in this House who takes exception to the introduction of pay equity in this province, but when the minister talks about its being proactive legislation, she should also talk about the fact that her government is not at this time making a commitment to fund her proactive program. In the years 1989 and 1990, the hospital administrators of this province are going to have to make a decision on whether or not she is, in fact, going to transfer those funds or whether they are going to have to cut back programs.

That is the answer the people of Ontario want. That is the answer I want. Answer me directly, for a change, instead of fluffing it off.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** There are many, many issues facing Ontario today. To have the leader of the third party get himself so exercised in the theatrics of question period over what ifs, what

might be at some point in the future, suggests to me that they are very short on questions.

**Mr. Brandt:** That is the second time she has been unable to answer the question. I will give her a third opportunity and I will repeat my first question.

Over a four- to five-year period, the costs to hospitals are \$115 million. She has had two years to plan what she is going to do with this program. I can tell members right now what this minister is going to say in another year from now, when the program has to be introduced. She is going to accuse the hospitals of bad planning and bad management and expect them, somewhere in their budgets, to absorb the amount of money that pay equity will cost the various hospitals across this province.

I am asking a very simple, straightforward question: What is it she plans on doing with respect to the funding that is going to be required for a program that she calls proactive and that she has introduced? Is she going to pay for it?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** I want to be very clear in my response to the leader of the third party when I tell him that we are committed, in principle, to addressing the issues of gender discrimination in pay practices. We know that the legislation requires that a study be done of the workforce. We know as well that the Ontario Hospital Association is looking at this issue right now and assisting its members in the implementation of this act, and I want to let him and the members of this House know that I believe that, in due course, we will work together to resolve any of the issues this legislation presents us in a manner that is fiscally responsible.

**Mr. Brandt:** The minister just does not know, does she? She frankly does not know the answer to the question; she has no idea.

My second question—

**Mr. Speaker:** To which minister?

**Mr. Brandt:** The same minister.

#### HEALTH SERVICES

**Mr. Brandt:** I want to refer the minister to a speech today that was delivered by Dr. Harry Gasmann, the president of the Ontario Medical Association—

**Hon. Mr. Scott:** It's Henry.

**Mr. Brandt:** Henry, sorry. This is a speech that was given today, in which Dr. Gasmann made some comments with respect to health service delivery in this province. He indicated: "As for a rationing of care, it already exists,

although it is imposed at random to those standing patiently in line."

Would the minister agree with the president of the Ontario Medical Association that the rationing of health care already exists in Ontario?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** No.

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**Mr. Brandt:** The minister does not know the answer to that one either. She is having a great day over there. I thought these were relatively simple questions.

Dr. Gasmann stated quite clearly that we have rationed care in Ontario and that it is troubling to those of us who helped build up the health care system in Ontario. Dr. Gasmann went on to say, "The government believes the medical profession will make rationing work by giving priority to the most serious cases. We will to the best of our ability, but let's stop calling it universal accessibility."

Will the minister not agree that as a result of the decisions of her ministry, we no longer have universal accessibility to health care in this province?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** In fact, I fundamentally disagree with the leader of the third party. I tell him that our goal in Ontario and our vision for the future is that we should have, across this province, equity in access to the most effective quality health services, the very best we can afford and as close to home as possible.

We recognize that we have and should be justifiably proud of one of the best health systems in the world. I encourage him to work with us as we face the enormous challenges, but I tell him that everything we do in government and everything I propose will be to give us quality of care, quality of life, dignity for the individual and empowerment of the individual to make good choices about his own health.

**Mr. Brandt:** All of which sounds good and means little when you are in a waiting line trying to get into a hospital. Why is it that waiting lines in this province are increasing virtually daily? Why is it that for heart procedures, as an example, some three years ago we had a waiting period of about three months; we are now up beyond six months. Statistically, you are more likely to die waiting for an operation in this province than you are undergoing the surgery. That is an absolute fact when it comes to heart surgery. The minister knows it. That statistic came from the Ontario Medical Association.

Is that the kind of statistic the minister refers to as being an accessible health care system and a

world-class health care system? How does the minister respond to those, of which I number myself, who have a concern that our health care system is deteriorating under her stewardship?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** Technology is one of the enormous pressures bringing stresses on to the health care system. In fact, what technology is doing for us is allowing the practice of medicine to do many things it was unable to do in the past. When the member is referring specifically to cardiac care, he should know that, I believe just within the last few years, there are now 50 per cent more people being recommended for this surgery than there were three years ago. The indications for surgery were expanded.

We at the ministry have attempted to respond to this. We monitor, on an ongoing basis, what the needs are. We flowed some \$21 million to expand the areas of critical care so that we could address that very issue. I would say that we recognize there are enormous challenges. We rely on the physicians in this province—fine, decent, hardworking physicians—to make sure the principle of our health care system is that those who require the most urgent care get it first. They do that using their very best medical judgement.

#### TACTICAL RESCUE UNITS

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** I have a question to the Solicitor General concerning the coroner's inquest into the tragic killing of Mr. Bastien by the Ontario Provincial Police.

I would like to ask the minister if she is aware that the lawyer for the family had requested last week that the coroner should remove himself from the case because, he said, that throughout the five-week inquest the coroner has demonstrated bias against everyone except the OPP and the tactical rescue unit. Such irresponsible actions have exacerbated a public perception that the incident is not receiving a full and public hearing.

Is the minister prepared now to indicate today, and this would not effect the coroner's inquest, that she will call a full public inquiry on this issue on completion of the coroner's inquest, to deal with this major public tragedy and the bigger question of what the future is for TRUs in this province?

**Hon. Mrs. Smith:** I am happy to repeat that at the end of this inquest we will indeed look at the future of the TRUs, at the appropriate use and the present use, and examine all the recommendations we look forward to receiving from the inquest team.



As to the accusations made by the attorney in this case, they are his opinions. I have been examining closely the evidence as it goes along. At this point, I have no reason to believe that these are substantiated. They are a matter of opinion of that particular lawyer who has his case to make as best he can.

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** The minister can say that at the completion of the coroner's inquest she and her government will review the future of TRUs in this province, but that is simply not good enough. The public has to be involved in this process and has a right to be involved in whether we want these kinds of tactical units even to exist in Ontario.

I am asking the minister today, will she call a public inquiry on the issue of the use of TRUs in this province? The public has a right to be involved to see that a tragedy like this never occurs again.

**Hon. Mrs. Smith:** I remind the member that the inquest process is a process involving the public, just as a jury process is a process involving the public. To ignore this fact and not to await the presentation of that coroner's inquest jury at the end of that inquest is in fact not to allow that particular method by which the public has input. Others will also be consulted. Certainly, we will be looking forward to the opinions of the opposition at that time. I look forward, with interest, to the opportunity of the coroner's inquest and the public, through that jury system, to make their recommendations to us.

#### CASE OF CHARLES DUROCHER

**Mr. Sterling:** I have a question of the Attorney General. Today, we learned that a career bank robber, Charles Durocher, who is presently serving a 15-year sentence, was given a mere slap on the wrist for escaping custody when in Toronto to testify against like-minded criminals. The six-month sentence he received was the result of plea bargaining. Can the minister elaborate on this case and tell us what happened with respect to the plea bargaining and why was it even considered for this individual.

**Hon. Mr. Scott:** I will have to undertake to provide an answer to the honourable member, which I will do as soon as I have had an opportunity to review the facts of the case to which he refers.

**Mr. Sterling:** According to the accused, the Metropolitan Toronto sergeant responsible for his custody permitted him to escape, gave him money for the express purpose that Durocher should go to Montreal to find out what had

happened to the stolen loot, more than \$1 million, for which he was currently serving time—to go and find this particular loot.

What I want to know is the real story behind this case. Is the fact that plea bargaining took place simply a ruse to hide the real facts of what happened during this particular case? Why was this individual allowed to go with the permission of the police when, in fact, that policeman probably did not have the discretion to do that? We want to know what was behind this particular case and I hope the minister will report that—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. Several questions have been asked.

**Hon. Mr. Scott:** The honourable member wants the real story. I will undertake to let him have the real story.

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#### APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING

**Mr. Tatham:** My question is to the Minister of Skills Development, regarding apprenticeships. I have had a request from a plumbing concern in Oxford. The man is a journeyman plumber and he has one apprentice. He wants to take on another apprentice, but evidently you have to have three more journeyman plumbers to do that. What is the rationale?

**Hon. Mr. Curling:** I will be happy to respond to the honourable member, who has raised his concern on numerous occasions with me. I think it would be appropriate to tell him that the apprenticeship and journeyman ratio has been a part of Ontario's apprenticeship program since the introduction in 1928. The ratios were originally established to ensure there was quality of training and workplace safety. However, they do have an unintended effect of restricting the number of workers able to enter the trades as apprentices.

The provincial advisory committee on trades recommends to the ministry specific ratios for these trades, these committees have equal representation on both sides. We are looking into that matter, and concerns have been raised in regard to the ratios.

**Mr. Tatham:** I appreciate what the minister has said, but what is he going to do about it specifically?

**Hon. Mr. Curling:** As you know, Mr. Speaker, the pattern of questions and answers is that there is a limited time in which you allow me to respond, so at first, what I did was to set the history in place.

The ministry is currently tabling the issue of the ratio for discussions, and we hope the provincial advisory committee meeting will be able to see whether these barriers are really impeding access to more apprentices in the program.

**Mr. Speaker:** New question, the member for Lake Nipigon.

**Mr. Pouliot:** Yes, indeed, when is the minister going to start doing his job?

#### HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION

**Mr. Pouliot:** I have a question for the Minister of Transportation. The minister will fully realize that the need to four-lane the Trans-Canada Highway in our special part of Ontario, north-western Ontario, is not only well documented but also universally supported. Over the past three years, the minister has had a pilgrimage from chambers of commerce and he has received petitions from motorists, from citizens who were concerned about safety, reminding him almost on a weekly basis that truck traffic has more than doubled.

Today, on the eve of the federal election, when promises between the two main participants on the federal scene are being thrown, like missiles, back and forth, they want to know, and they have asked me to be the courier on behalf of the fine people of the north, they want the minister to make a commitment regarding his exciting plans to at long last four-lane the Trans-Canada Highway, in stages, from Nipigon to the Shabaqua Corners in northwestern Ontario.

**Hon. Mr. Fulton:** I thought there were three main contestants up in the member's—are there only two? I guess that is why the member has been absent. He has been quite busy recently, has he?

I do appreciate the member's continued interest in this question, which he has raised in this House before and I expect he appreciates our ongoing interest in eventually getting on with the project. He would be aware that substantial work is continuing in the area of Kenora with the Kenora bypass. We are doing a number of other projects over the total length of the Trans-Canada Highway, Highway 17-Highway 11. I know he has a particular interest in the 11-17 sector between Thunder Bay and Kenora.

I can tell the member that we too consider that a very high priority when we are able to get on with some work, but I would remind him his colleague the member for Algoma (Mr. Wildman) and others also have what they consider the number one priority for widening and rehabilitat-

ing the same highway. We are working very closely with all of those members and all of the delegations and other interested parties that the member has talked to and referred to with respect to getting on with the project, but he will be aware that a number of projects, in fact from Ottawa to Kenora, are under way now.

**Mr. Pouliot:** This could indeed be a feather in the minister's cap, and more important perhaps, the people of the north would get the feeling that they are getting value for money. There is nothing like good roads. They are badly needed. They can relate to that. Right now, with the highest of respect, of course, they feel that they are getting ripped off, that they are not getting their share of development.

Very simply, my question is as follows: Will the minister make a commitment today and give us the assurance that he will four-lane the Trans-Canada Highway on a phased basis, on a step-by-step approach?

**Hon. Mr. Fulton:** I think we have said in the past, and I would reiterate it again, that we are selectively and incrementally improving the capacity, widening and correcting particular safety concerns from one end of the highway in question to the other. The member will be aware of that. He will also be well aware of a number of highway and secondary road improvements throughout the north.

I am sure he will also be aware, since he has visited the north just recently, that indeed we have spoken to the federal minister, as we have always said we would, and we will continue that dialogue. As recently as September, for the first time perhaps, we now have an indication that at least the federal minister of the day might be willing to sit down with the province of Ontario to address this very real, necessary and needed project.

#### APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING

**Mrs. Cunningham:** My question is for the Minister of Skills Development, and I am certain his colleague the member for Oxford (Mr. Tatham) will be most interested in his response.

The minister has stated that he is working with four other ministries to develop a comprehensive, systematic labour market policy. We do not need another make-work project for five ministries. What we do need are more apprenticeship programs for Ontario's young people. What specific plan has the minister made, specifically with the Minister of Education (Mr. Ward), to improve the interface between secondary schools



and the workplace for more apprenticeship spaces?

**Hon. Mr. Curling:** I just want to bring the honourable member up to date in that regard. I know she has a keen interest in all the apprentices, as she has indicated to me a number of times.

First, I would like to comment on the first part of the member's question, that I am working with four other ministries. This is extremely important because we cannot do this on our own. We feel very strongly, and I am sure the member does too, that we must work with the other ministries in bringing about a very effective training culture within this province. I can report to her that my colleagues from those respective ministries are doing a terrific job in order to bring about this training culture.

Having said that, we were committed very strongly to increasing apprenticeships from 40,000 to 60,000 within five years. Again, I would like to report to the honourable member that as of today, we have 45,000 apprentices in the system. I think that is quite a commendable task that we have done.

**Mrs. Cunningham:** The Ministry of Skills Development and the Ministry of Housing hosted a great building industry extravaganza last May in Toronto, which 50,000 students attended from across this province. The minister has had seven months to plan for follow-up action to this building industry conference. It is crucial that our schools, students and teachers get the leadership they need from the government today.

Will the minister stand in the House today and reveal his specific plans for a course of action to implement additional apprenticeship programs in the building trades for our young people?

**Hon. Mr. Curling:** I want to commend the Minister of Housing (Ms. Hošek) for that very progressive conference that was put on in Future Building '88, attracting a number of students from across the province. As a matter of fact, the honourable member shared with me how excited she was about the fact that many people came from London to participate. I think it was very effective. They had a taste of what the construction industry can offer.

The boom in the economy today, especially in the construction industry, has really demanded much more than we can supply. Apprentices or journeymen cannot be delivered within a week, two weeks or three weeks. I have just demonstrated to the member that in one year we have added 5,000 more apprentices in the program. As a matter of fact, I just want to touch a little bit on

the previous question—and this is extremely important—about two schools that are working co-operatively in bringing about an apprenticeship program, one in Wellington, which I feel will serve the needs of this province for a long time to come.

1430

## REGULATORY PROCESS

**Mr. Fleet:** My question is for the Attorney General. Last June, as a committee chairman, I tabled in the Legislature the regulatory reform report. Every single person in Ontario is affected by literally thousands of regulations. Following an extensive review, this report documented a need for broad reform and advanced 44 specific recommendations. They are based on three principles: fair treatment of the public, greater public accessibility to regulations and more effective legislative accountability.

I would like to ask the Attorney General what steps the government has taken towards reform and when a comprehensive government response will be tabled in the Legislature.

**Hon. Mr. Scott:** I would like to thank the member for High Park-Swansea for his question and to congratulate him, as chairman, and the members of the standing committee on regulations and private bills, who really prepared, if I may respectfully say so, an extensive and very valuable report on what is regarded by many as a relatively dry subject, the subject of regulations. As the committee pointed out, it is a subject that is of very great importance to ordinary Ontario citizens, whether they know it or not, and, as he says, a package of very fundamental recommendations about change was made.

Regulations, of course, are issued by cabinet, the Lieutenant Governor in Council, on the recommendation of ministries, and almost every ministry under one statute or another has an interest in regulations. What we are doing presently is trying to sample the opinion of the various ministries about the proposals that have been made by the committee. I hope that in due course we will be able to make the appropriate response to the House.

**Mr. Fleet:** What is most important is the government's commitment to reform. Will the Attorney General make a commitment that the government response will be reform-oriented and based on the three important principles of greater fairness to the public, greater accessibility for the public and more effective legislative accountability?



**Hon. Mr. Scott:** Both the member for High Park-Swansea and I in St. George-St. David, as we knocked off our opponents in the last election, did so because we made a commitment to reform. I know that he would share with other members of the government the responsibility of carrying this forward, not only generally but in the regulatory field as well, and I hope we will.

#### INTERVAL AND TRANSITION HOUSES

**Mr. R. F. Johnston:** I would like to go back to the Minister of Community and Social Services, the keeper of the lists in the province, and go back again, if I might, to the whole question of funding for battered women's services. The minister has talked a great deal about the moneys put into promotion and some ancillary services, but will he confirm to the House today that his government has done little in terms of adding beds in transition houses other than what the Tories under Frank Drea promised in terms of family resource centres? Has he built any new transition houses themselves since he has been in power? How many beds is he responsible for?

**Hon. Mr. Sweeney:** The honourable member refers to the family resource centres, which in fact we have opened up in northern Ontario. He well knows that, in addition to other services, these centres are designed to meet the needs of abused and battered women and are being used for that purpose. There are 14 of those spread across northern Ontario. The member will also know that recently in Windsor 40 more beds were opened up.

But I want to draw to the member's attention that the advocacy group for victims of family violence clearly indicated to us a couple of years ago that stabilizing the funding for existing transition houses was their first priority. Their second priority was having child counselling services in those transition houses. Their third priority was having counselling services in the community. Their fourth priority was having a telephone service and a transportation service. All of those things have been done.

**Mr. R. F. Johnston:** Far be it from me to say that the minister is not being exactly accurate in the way he has portrayed their demands. They will be back to him on November 28, and then he will hear again very clearly the need for real transition houses. As the minister knows, 12 of those family resource centres were promised by the Tories, 12 of the 14 he is talking about.

**Hon. Mr. Sweeney:** Who delivered them?

**Mr. R. F. Johnston:** They were already prebudgeted; the minister knows that. How many

new beds has he brought in to account for this incredible demand: nine people coming, one person being served? These are battered women in real need of assistance. Where are the new spaces the minister has added?

**Hon. Mr. Sweeney:** We come back to the argument we have had with respect to other services of our ministry. With a certain number of resources, what do you use them for?

We were clearly asked by the advocacy groups, rather than build new transition houses, rather than add on more beds, that we had an initial responsibility to stabilize the funding for the beds we presently had. We have done that. We have added \$3,000 per bed for internal counselling. We have added funding for the child services within the house, which they were asking for. We are currently negotiating with the houses across the province to pay for, in addition to their basic per diem, between 80 per cent and 100 per cent of the costs that then reside.

Those were things we were asked to do before we added new beds. We can do one or the other, but we cannot do both.

#### RENT REGULATION

**Mr. Harris:** My question is for the Minister of Housing and it relates to the rent review process. Can the minister tell us what percentage of decisions on rent review applications are appealed and therefore must go on to the rent review hearings stage?

**Hon. Ms. Hošek:** I do not have the exact numbers of that today. I will be glad to get the numbers for the member at the next opportunity.

**Mr. Harris:** The target was 25 per cent. I do not think anybody thinks that target is being met. Even at 25 per cent, with a backlog of 21,000, that means there are 5,250 ready to go on to appeal. With 23 commissioners hearing 15 cases a month, really what the minister is looking at is a minimum of 15 months, assuming she was on the target of 25 per cent. Not all the commissioners are full-time. We know it is more than 25 per cent, and that is only if there are no new applications.

Clearly, what we have here is a situation that everybody has recognized—the industry, tenants, landlords, developers, legislators, the media—that this legislation is not working.

If the minister does not even know what the percentage is, does not know what is going on in the ministry, there really is not any point in my asking a supplementary on the rest of the question.



**Hon. Ms. Hošek:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** I really do not know whether there was a question there.

**Hon. Ms. Hošek:** Let me pretend there was and try to answer it.

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

1440

#### CONTRACTING OF MINISTRY SERVICES

**Mr. Wildman:** I have a question for the Minister of Natural Resources. Can the minister confirm these figures, which were provided at the forum on contracting out, by members of the Ministry of Natural Resources staff? They stated that it costs, on average, 18 cents per tree under the forest management agreements, about 16 cents per tree for a contractor and nine cents per tree when the work is done by the Ministry of Natural Resources staff for the replanting program. Can the minister confirm those figures?

**Hon. Mr. Kerrio:** No, I cannot.

**Mr. Wildman:** I am not sure if that means that he just cannot confirm the figures or that he does not think they are right. These figures were provided by ministry staff.

**Hon. Mr. Kerrio:** I knew that.

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** You agreed with the first two figures he used.

**Mr. Speaker:** I wonder if I could have the attention of all members of the House. I know the member for Algoma (Mr. Wildman) is struggling with laryngitis. Would you assist him?

**Mr. Wildman:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I said that these figures were provided by the ministry staff. The minister says he does not know that. I just said it. Frankly, I said it and it is true.

**Mr. Speaker:** Do you have a supplementary?

**Mr. Wildman:** I believe he is an honourable member; surely he believes I am, too. If these figures are correct, it costs approximately one half for the work to be done by the ministry staff themselves. If that is the case and there is a shortage of funding for replanting, why is the ministry not doing more of the work itself so we can get more work done for the money we have?

**Hon. Mr. Kerrio:** There was an initiative taken—and I am sure all members realize that was the case—that we would move some of the forestry practices into the private sector: growing, planting, doing many things. I think the

member would be the first to admit that we have provided many opportunities for people in northern Ontario to become very much involved in forestry practice.

Now, I must tell him that the ultimate goal for our ministry is to get the numbers of trees planted that are going to provide the kind of jobs, the kind of parks and the kind of involvement for all the people to enjoy. While he is stating some figures—and I hesitate ever to agree with figures that are stated until I examine them myself—I am prepared to share one bit of figures with the member. When we look back at my involvement with forestry practices and the planting, I will just put a few numbers on the record for him. In fiscal year 1984-85, we planted 128 million trees; in 1985-86, 150 million trees; in 1986-87, 155 million trees; in 1987-88, 160 million trees; and in 1988-89, 163 million trees. We not only plant them but we nurture them and we tend them until they are free to grow. Forestry is in excellent hands, I must tell the member, and it is going to get even better.

#### ROUGE VALLEY

**Mrs. Marland:** My question is to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. Obviously, things are looking up on this side of the House.

The Premier (Mr. Peterson) refuses to discuss his government's plan for the Rouge, and I mean the entire Rouge area. He talks in circles and in evasive terms about the broader picture.

Let's avoid the broader picture and talk specifics. Months ago the minister and his colleagues spoke about the cabinet reviewing the Rouge land. After each ministry responded, there would be an announcement. I believe the term "very soon" was used. Now that the cabinet must have studied this issue to death, when can we expect the announcement about the future of the Rouge lands?

**Hon. Mr. Eakins:** I am sure that we will have some reply very soon. The Premier has already made a commitment as to what is going to happen to the Rouge. But you know, the influence of the Rouge is not that one small area; it extends right up a long way north, as the member knows. We are looking at that. We are in touch with the municipal councils. They are dealing with that, and we will be coming back with that very soon.

**Mrs. Marland:** The point is that the minister should know that yes, the municipal council, Scarborough city council, dealt with it in June. It passed its amending bylaw in June. Metro council has also passed it. They are now waiting for the Ontario government to take a position. I



would like to say at this point that I applaud the people of Scarborough, because now that they have elected Mayor Joyce Trimmer, we will not have any concern at the local level about the Rouge, but we do have a concern at the provincial level.

When the minister says again that he will have the announcement very soon, I think it is a little unfair, because that is the answer we have been getting now for almost one year. Would he answer for me when his ministry will approve the Scarborough official plan amendment to zone the Rouge property for rural recreation?

**Hon. Mr. Eakins:** We are reviewing the comments from the municipality. Of course, there is a new mayor and a new council. I am sure they will want to have some extra input into that also, so we will be dealing with it fairly soon indeed.

#### PROPOSED LANDFILL SITE

**Mr. Charlton:** I have a question for the Minister of the Environment. The minister will be aware that Steetley Industries in Flamboro has made application to convert a limestone quarry to a landfill site. I attended last week with a group of citizens in the Greensville area and viewed the site, and I would be curious whether the minister is even seriously considering this proposal for a licensed landfill site in this quarry, which is obviously totally unsuitable. Would the minister please comment on his view of this application?

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** As is the case with all information that is sought about the process or applications that come before the Ministry of the Environment, they are assessed very carefully by environmental officers, not only people from the Ministry of the Environment itself, although they have the lead role in that kind of assessment, but also people from the Ministry of Natural Resources, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and others who may have a commenting activity. As well as health considerations we have environmental considerations.

In this particular instance, we are very interested in the kinds of matters that the member for Hamilton Mountain (Mr. Charlton) brings to our attention. I know the member for Wentworth North (Mr. Ward) has expressed the same point of view, that there are concerns about the potential forest site there.

Now, a Minister of the Environment is in the position of ensuring that it is assessed environmentally. If I were to block every proposal at the initial instance, we would not have anything at all in Ontario in terms of waste disposal. Even the

process we have at the present time, I say to the member for Hamilton Mountain, is severely criticized by those who want to move it along faster and do not want to spend a lot of money.

I happen to think that system is essential to protect the environment. The member for Hamilton Mountain would know from his experience with the Upper Ottawa Street site, for instance, that that would have been able to use an environmental assessment, and it might have avoided many of the problems that he knows about and has brought to the House's attention and the remedial action that had to be taken as a result.

**Mr. Charlton:** I understand the minister's general comment about not wanting to reject applications outright at the first stage. On the other hand, the minister is all too clearly aware of the problems we have had right across this province with quarries that have been used for landfill sites, including the Upper Ottawa Street landfill site. They leak like sieves; they are like a can with no top and no bottom.

Will the Minister assure this House that there will be no open quarries approved for landfill sites until we have in this province a tested and proven landfill liner technology in place?

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** There are two aspects to that answer. First of all, the Ministry of the Environment itself is very interested in that kind of proposed technology—in other words, that people have to justify, before our ministry accepts it, that it is environmentally safe.

In addition to that, you find when there is a board hearing under the auspices of the Environmental Assessment Board—and I should say to the member, because he would be interested in this, that if this proposal were to come forward to the Ministry of the Environment in a formal way, it must go under the Environmental Assessment Act, not the Environmental Protection Act, even though it is private sector and in the past you did not have to put it under the Environmental Assessment Act; I want to assure him of that.

The Environmental Assessment Board will take into consideration such things as, is there the potential of leachate leaking from a site of this kind and what are the possibilities of remedial action that could be taken to ensure that the leachate would not escape into the natural environment? If they are unable to justify that, if they are unable to provide the technical information that is absolutely necessary to justify this kind of proposal, it would not be accepted by the Environmental Assessment Board.



**Mr. Speaker:** That actually was a very brief answer; it was only 73 seconds.

1450

## PETITIONS

### MADAWASKA HIGHLANDS REGIONAL TRUST PARK

**Mr. Pollock:** To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario from 1,500 people, which reads as follows:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"We wish to oppose the Madawaska highlands regional trust proposal. We want the Legislature of Ontario to have a full debate in the Legislature on this matter and hearings to be held in the communities affected," before any legislation is ever put in place.

**Mr. Speaker:** Could I have the attention of all members? There are many private conversations and even conversations from members not in their own seats.

### TEACHERS' SUPERANNUATION FUND

**Mr. Tatham:** "To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"To amend the Teachers' Superannuation Act, 1983, in order that all teachers who retired prior to May 31, 1982, have their pensions recalculated on the best five years rather than at the present seven or 10 years.

"This proposed amendment would make the five-year criteria applicable to all retired teachers and would eliminate the present inequitable treatment."

It is signed by 77 and also myself.

### RETAIL STORE HOURS

**Mr. Dietsch:** I have a petition:

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"Whereas we strongly oppose the intention of Bill 113 for Sunday opening, we believe that the Ontario government must act to maintain Sunday as a common pause day."

It is signed by a number of employees from Autotrend Acura in my riding, and I have affixed my name thereto.

## CHURCH OF SCIENTOLOGY

**Mrs. LeBourdais:** "To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows"—243 signatures from the Church of Scientology.

I would like to table it at this time.

## REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

### STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Neumann from the standing committee on social development reported the following resolution:

That supply in the following amounts and to defray the expenses of the Ministry of Colleges and Universities be granted to Her Majesty for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1989:

Ministry	administration	program,
\$5,874,400;	university support	program,
\$1,648,759,400;	college support	program,
\$709,063,500;	student affairs	program,
\$202,959,800.		

### STANDING COMMITTEE ON REGULATIONS AND PRIVATE BILLS

Mr. Furlong from the standing committee on regulations and private bills presented the following report and moved its adoption:

The committee begs to report the following bills without amendment:

Bill Pr18, An Act respecting the Sarnia Kiwanis Foundation Inc.;

Bill Pr63, An Act to revive Tavone Enterprises Limited; and

Bill Pr 65, An Act respecting the Kitchener and Waterloo Community Foundation.

Your committee recommends that the fees, less the actual cost of printing, be remitted on Bill Pr18, An Act respecting the Sarnia Kiwanis Foundation Inc., and Bill Pr65, An Act respecting the Kitchener and Waterloo Community Foundation.

Motion agreed to.

## MOTION

### REFERRAL OF BILL 78

Hon. Mr. Conway moved that the order of the House referring Bill 78, An Act respecting the Sale of Farm Implements, to the standing committee on resources development be rescinded and the bill referred to the committee of the whole House.

**Hon. Mr. Conway:** Let me speak to that motion very briefly. For the information of the House, we had a very good debate in here yesterday in which such of my colleagues as the member for Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry (Mr. Villeneuve) and the member for Algoma (Mr. Wildman) participated.

We had decided yesterday to refer the bill in question out to the standing committee on resources development. An overnight discussion has taken place and it has now been decided that it would be more appropriate to have that bill back in the committee of the whole.

If I might on this motion indicate the order of business today, we will proceed with the second reading of Bill 83, after which we will return to committee of the whole on Bill 78, which this motion will make possible.

**Mr. Wildman:** New Democrat is the name; compromise is the game.

Motion agreed to.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### FARM PRACTICES PROTECTION ACT

Hon. Mr. Riddell moved second reading of Bill 83, An Act respecting the Protection of Farm Practices.

**Hon. Mr. Riddell:** I am tabling for second reading the Farm Practices Protection Act. The bill is intended to protect the farmers of this province from nuisance law suits against normal farming practices.

Ontario farmers have become increasingly concerned that normal farm practices may result in complaints, harassment and court actions under the common law of nuisance initiated by neighbours in the rural communities. Our farmers need the freedom to carry on normal farm practices to produce one of life's essential elements, our food. Carrying out this important task can result in noise, odour or dust.

In response to these concerns raised by individual farmers and farm organizations such as the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, I appointed the Minister's Right to Farm Advisory Committee in February 1986. In its mandate, the committee was responsible for advising me on policy options for ensuring that Ontario farm operations have adequate protection from complaints against normal farming practices.

Among its activities, the right to farm advisory committee held public hearings across the province. Some 280 farm and nonfarm organizations, municipalities and individuals made oral presentations or submitted briefs to the commit-

tee and the ministry on the issue of the right to farm.

As a result, the committee recommended in its report to me that, among other things, "new legislation be enacted as soon as possible for the purpose of ensuring that farmers have protection against nuisance actions over normal farming practices...."

Under the proposed act, a Farm Practices Protection Board will be established. Individuals who complain about odour, noise or dust from farm practices may ask the board to investigate and the board could hold hearings on such complaints referred to it.

The Farm Practices Protection Act also enables the board to dismiss complaints if the noise, dust or odour resulted from a normal farming practice or to issue an order to rectify the problem if it is found not to be a normal farming practice.

As with right-to-farm legislation of other provinces and states, a farm operation under this proposed act must also comply with existing environmental, public health and land use control laws.

It is important to note that "right to farm" under this legislation does not mean the right to pollute. An underlying principle of this act is the requirement that farm practices continue to comply with other provincial legislation, specifically the Environmental Protection Act, the Pesticides Act, the Public Health Act and the Ontario Water Resources Act.

However, farm organizations have expressed concern that farmers could be subject to charges under the Environmental Protection Act due to the noise, odour or dust arising from normal farming practices.

Under protocols developed with the Ministry of the Environment, staff responsibilities for dealing with complaints about noise, odour or dust have been established. The intent is that where a complaint cannot be resolved or otherwise addressed by staff, the complainant can direct the complaint to the Farm Practices Protection Board. The board will then make its determination as to whether the farm practice is normal. This determination by the board will be made before any decision is made whether to proceed under the Environmental Protection Act.

### 1500

The Farm Practices Protection Act will confirm the view that agriculture is the primary land use within agricultural areas of Ontario. It will help in dealing with current and future nuisance incidents arising from existing conditions. I ask the members of this Legislature to assist in



providing future stability for this sector of the Ontario agricultural industry by approving the second reading of the Farm Practices Protection Act. With their approval, the farmers of this province can carry on the normal and economically significant business of farming without the threat of legal action under the common law of nuisance.

I anticipate that the bill will go to committee. I had hoped that it would go to committee of the whole House where we could deal with it and have the legislation in place for those farmers who are anxiously waiting to get this legislation, but when it does go to committee I will be making one minor amendment that I wish to introduce to subsection 6(2) of the bill which will include a reference to the Pesticides Act.

**Mr. Wildman:** I would like to apologize to members of the House for the condition of my voice. I will attempt to carry on as best I can.

As the minister indicated, this is a significant piece of legislation and one that has been awaited for some time and has been discussed in this House, as well as in the farm community, for a good deal of time.

I recall that a former member, Ronald McNeil from Elgin, first introduced a private member's bill some years ago for the protection of farm practices—the right-to-farm legislation—in this House. It was debated and carried by the House and was a matter of unanimous concern, even among urban members of the Legislature.

The bill that we have before us, Bill 83, tries to deal with these concerns. As we all know, as development patterns in rural areas and farm technology have changed over the years, conflicts have developed over land use. These conflicts have increased in recent years, particularly with the boom in the development of housing subdivisions and communities on areas of land that were traditionally mainly agricultural in the area of southern Ontario. This has led to serious concerns.

As urbanites have fled the tumult and the pollution of cities, these conflicts have increased dramatically. There are two sides to this. A cynic might ask: "Who sold the land to the developers? Who then built the houses for the urbanites?" Obviously it was someone who was farming the land or owned the farm land in the past. So in a sense, the farm community has also contributed to the development of these conflicts.

I think that is too simple an explanation, however. I think that a couple of the reasons that we have had these developments in the farm community relate first to the financial crisis that

many farmers have found themselves in over the last few years, the fact that even farmers who were doing well viewed their farm, their land, as their retirement income, and as farming became financially more difficult, it was more and more difficult to sell the land to a young farmer or a young person who wanted to go into farming.

Particularly as development extended into the more rural areas, the value of the land, the real estate, increased and made it more difficult for people who might be considering farming to purchase that land. With the escalation of the value of the land, more and more of this land was purchased by developers and people who had other reasons for wanting to purchase the land than farming.

One of the other reasons, of course, was that there was inadequate land use planning, and I do not blame even the small municipalities for this. I think if there is any blame to be shared, that rests with the provincial government: the previous government and this government.

We have talked a lot over the years in this assembly about the need to preserve farm land. We have looked at what other provinces have done. We have seen the legislation that has been passed in jurisdictions such as British Columbia, for instance, but we have not done anything. We have land use guidelines which are just that: they are guidelines. They do not have the force of law.

So we have the development of these conflicts. Many people from urban Ontario, when they move into a rural area, do not understand the kinds of practices, or nuisances as they would refer to them, that are quite normal in a rural area. The bill refers to three things specifically: odour, noise and dust. All of us who have ever lived in a rural area, or even visited a rural area, realize that there are odours associated with various farm practices which no one finds particularly pleasant but which farm people, and rural people generally, accept as a necessary part of farming.

I suppose when an urban person moves into a rural area and has purchased an estate lot and built a lovely house right next door to a farm, he does not appreciate it when his neighbour, the farmer, spreads his pig manure on a field neighbouring his property so for a few days there is a significant odour associated with the neighbouring farm.

But frankly, as a person who has lived in rural areas most of my life—for a short period of time I lived in a city—and who has been involved with the farm community in one way or another from time to time throughout my life, I find it hard to understand how it is an urban person who decides



to move to a rural area does not realize that he is going to have these odours and that he is going to have to put up with them, but in many cases he does not want to.

1510

In terms of noise, you will find a situation where we all know that you have to make hay when the sun shines. If there is good weather, and you are in harvesting or planting season, for instance, the farmer wants to be able to run his machinery from dawn to dusk, if necessary, to get the job done, and even, in cases, to go on beyond darkness because the farmers have to get the job done while they have good weather. Unfortunately, many people who move into the rural areas seem to think that a farmer should only be operating from nine to five.

**Mr. Villeneuve:** Even on a Sunday?

**Mr. Wildman:** My wife grew up on a dairy farm and her father always took the attitude that Sunday was Sunday. I suppose that like the present government, he exercised the local option and no matter what the weather was like, he did not work on Sunday. Even if it had been raining all week and he had hay to take off and it was a nice day on Sunday, he still did not work. However, that is not "normal," I suppose, to use the word in the legislation today. If a farmer has good weather and he needs to get his crop off, even if it is a Sunday, he will work.

Certainly a person from an urban area who is used to seeing the weekend as a time for recreation and rest does not appreciate it when a piece of heavy equipment right next door starts operating on his nice quiet Sunday afternoon when he is out barbecuing in the backyard. So we run into these kinds of conflicts.

Obviously, if you are tilling the land and there is any kind of breeze, even with the new methods and the new concern for land stewardship, there is going to be dust. Farmers, in their operations, produce dust. If you have wind, that dust then can blow on to the neighbour's property, and the neighbour does not appreciate having to clean the house continually to get rid of the dust. So we have these conflicts.

The conflicts are not just between neighbours in the sense that the urban person or a group of people living next door to the farm might not like the way their neighbour, the farmer, is operating. What happens is that it spills into municipal politics. We have situations where township councils become dominated by urban people or ex-urban people who, as their numbers increase in the population of the community, run in elections, as is their right, and get elected to

council. They may not have the same understanding of the farm and how it operates as the people who have been born and raised in that community.

They have a tendency to listen to complaints from their constituents, who are less sympathetic to the farm and to the farmer. They tend to pass bylaws limiting the hours of work, for instance, and regulating odours, noise and dust. Some of these regulations make it very difficult for the farmer to carry out his operation. So we have these serious concerns.

In answer to these concerns, as I said earlier, we have had discussions about legislation in this House. I congratulate our former colleague, Ron McNeil, for bringing before the House the right-to-farm legislation that was passed by the House.

In answer to that, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, as the minister indicated, appointed a task force to consult with the various players in the field—that is not supposed to be a bad pun—and to make recommendations on how we could legislate protection of farm practices. Those recommendations then became the basis for Bill 83, which is before us today.

In the bill it states that the purpose is, "...to protect persons engaged in agricultural operations from claims for nuisance in respect of odour, noise or dust resulting from those operations if they are normal farm practices." I am in support of this purpose, but I have some problems with the wording, and I will be talking about that in a few moments.

I think "nuisance" is a good word, and it should not be limited just to three particular types of nuisance, because there may be other conflicts that develop over a nuisance which do not involve odour, noise or dust. For instance, I suppose a farmer might have an aircraft come in and do aerial spraying of a pesticide or something and the breeze might carry that pesticide on to the neighbour's property. That would not entail odour or dust or even noise perhaps, but it might be considered a nuisance and it might produce a conflict.

If this board which is being proposed, the Farm Practices Protection Board, in the legislation is to be able to deal with nuisances, I think it should be able to deal with all nuisances, not just nuisances related to these three matters.

Also, the bill uses throughout the term "normal farm practices." We know the Ontario Federation of Agriculture in its discussions with the ministry on the development of this legislation has raised some concerns about the word



“normal” and has suggested that perhaps we should be looking at another wording. I will be dealing with that in a few moments.

The responsibility of the board will be to try to resolve any disputes about what constitutes a “normal farm practice.” I said earlier that we support and are sympathetic to this view and to the purposes of the act, but really in our party what we think is necessary is proper land use planning and land use control.

In our view, the Food Land Guidelines have not worked. We need to include food land preservation policy in municipal plans. We must enact a food land policy statement under the Planning Act which would have the force of law and would require municipalities to include food land policy statements as part of their official plans and could then be enforced.

I support the position of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture in its demand that we should be setting aside agricultural preserves as part of our land use planning. It is unfortunate that this government at this time has not acted on that request of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture. That is a position that is also supported by the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario. I think it is something we have to look very seriously at.

All of us in this House know the kind of development boom taking place around Metropolitan Toronto particularly. It is also happening in eastern Ontario around Ottawa, in the Ottawa-Carleton area, and to a lesser extent around other urban areas in the province. We cannot continue, if we are serious about farming and agriculture as the basic industry in this province, to allow good farm land, classes 1, 2 and 3 farm land, to go into housing.

As someone who represents not only a rural area but also a northern constituency, I would say those of us from northern Ontario find it very difficult to understand why people living in this part of the province seem to think it is a good thing that we continue to concentrate everything, all kinds of development, all kinds of urban and industrial development, on the good farm land in southern Ontario while our part of the province is being depleted in terms of population. People are having to leave our part of the province to come here to get employment and to find a place to live and work.

It just does not make sense, but if we are going to change that, it is not going to be changed by pious statements in the House. It is not going to be changed by guidelines. It is going to take political will on the part of the government of the day to pass laws and regulations that will require

serious land use planning and direction of growth into low-growth areas.

## 1520

Part of that serious planning must be the setting aside of good agricultural land in agricultural preserves. We must be moving to prevent further urban encroachment into rural areas through sound land use planning. We—the government and municipalities—already have the right to prohibit severances of farm land. As a representative of a rural area, I know the problems that all MPPs from rural Ontario run into when a farmer wants to sever a lot for sale, particularly when things have not been going well on the farm and this is a way of supplementing the income.

In the short term, the farmer wants to be able to sell some land and supplement his income in that way. However, it is short term, because in the long run, you get all kinds of problems unless there are serious controls on the severances of farm land and the concentration of development into, at least, small towns.

So, we can prohibit severances of farm land and we can be doing something about development of housing on prime farm land, but what is missing is the political resolve to withstand development pressures.

I have read with interest the newspaper articles about what is happening in the environs of Metropolitan Toronto, north of Toronto in the York area. I do not know whether all of the allegations put forward in the newspaper stories are correct, but I do know that if you have a number of wealthy developers who want to build, it is not inconceivable that they would be able to put a great deal of pressure on municipal politicians to allow for those developments, even if that municipality has a land use plan, an official plan which sets land aside. It is not a healthy situation for those communities, in my view, and it certainly is not a healthy situation for the province as a whole, or for agriculture in Ontario.

I am concerned about this legislation specifically, though, because I think Bill 83 raises false hopes. I do not think that Bill 83 in itself is going to prevent the kinds of difficulties and conflicts between the farm community and urban people who move into the rural areas unless it is combined with a serious attempt at proper land use planning.

There are other problems with Bill 83, and I referred to them earlier. If you concentrate on the term “normal farm practices,” in a particular area something might be a normal farm practice



which is not necessarily the best farm practice. By concentrating on the term "normal," this bill may indeed retard implementation of new farming techniques and new technologies that might indeed improve the efficiency of the farm at the same time as limiting nuisances.

As long as normal farm practices are protected, there is little incentive to follow the lead of other farmers who have upgraded their facilities, perhaps at considerable expense. Under the bill, the normal farm practice is defined as a practice "conducted in a manner consistent with...similar agricultural operations under similar circumstances." Something could be normal but also at the same time unnecessary, unreasonable or inefficient, but it still could be a common practice and in common use.

Some people would say: "The market does not work that way. If the practice is inefficient, the farmer is not going to continue that practice, because it is going to put him in a situation that makes it difficult for him to compete with the other farmers working in the same sector." That is not necessarily true, particularly if that farmer is experiencing a cash flow problem and to upgrade would in fact cost him more money than he thinks he can afford. For instance, we have all heard about the celebrated bird-banger case, which I understand was just last month finally settled out of court.

I do not think the settlement really solved the concerns of either the owner of the farm or his neighbours, but at least it was settled. I do not think that Bill 83, frankly, as it is drafted, is going to resolve the problems that were presented in the bird-banger case. As the minister indicated, the farmer and the board, if it is hearing a dispute, are subject to other pieces of legislation, such as the Environmental Protection Act. The Environmental Protection Act sets a limit of 70 decibels for noise. Sometimes during question period in this assembly I am certain that we reach levels quite in excess of 70 decibels.

**Mr. Villeneuve:** Not when you have laryngitis.

**Mr. Wildman:** Not when you have laryngitis.

If those provisions and regulations on the Environmental Protection Act still apply, then Bill 83 is not going to resolve the problems that resulted from the use of the bird-banger to protect fruit from the flocks of birds that would like to consume the fruit rather than have the farmer be able to harvest it. Now, I understand that as part of the settlement of this case, they are going to be able to continue to use the bird-banger with some

restrictions. They will have to erect some sound barriers to protect the neighbours.

Perhaps this is a good idea, but the erection of the sound barriers, as I understand it, was not part of a normal farm practice. So if the board is going to consider these kinds of issues, it will not be able to say that you should have noise barriers, because that is not part of the normal practice in the area. Maybe it should be able to say that.

**1530**

Some environmentalists and environmental organizations have raised another example. I have talked about the problems of odour related to manure. Manure does not just have a pollution problem related to odour. We know that if manure is not properly stored, in times of heavy rain it can produce runoff that will contaminate ground water and streams in the area.

In many parts of Ontario, in my part particularly, it is common practice for farmers who have livestock, whether it be a dairy farm, a beef operation, hogs or whatever, to store the manure simply in a pile behind the barn or in a pit behind the barn. That is a normal farm practice that may in fact produce pollution the farmer does not want to produce, but that has always been the way it was done and it is normal.

It has been suggested, and it is in use in some parts of the province, storing the manure you intend to use later on the land in a concrete tank or a metal tank. If you do it that way, it is less likely to run off and contaminate ground water. This is not exactly a tremendously innovative technology, but it is expensive and so it is not in general use.

As long as it were normal to pile manure behind the barn without these kinds of protections, if someone complained manure was not being properly stored, then the farmer could go to the board, I suppose, under this legislation, and say, "Well, this is normal."

The question is, is it reasonable? It may be normal, but is it reasonable?

All of us in this House, particularly those from rural Ontario, know about the need for improved stewardship of our soil and water resources. The Ministry of Agriculture and Food has recognized that through the land stewardship program. Agriculture in Ontario, and in Canada for that matter, faces a very serious problem of soil erosion and soil degradation. Because of our tillage techniques that have been used in the past, much of our topsoil has been blown away in dust. A lot of it has been subject to water erosion and runoff into water courses. This harms the fertility of the topsoil, but it also then adversely affects



the water courses in the rural areas and eventually ends up in the lakes, because that soil often carries with it pesticides and fertilizers into the water.

I think Bill 83 would be more effective if it were amended, wherever it now says in the bill, "normal farm practice," to say, "reasonable farm practice," because what is normal may not in fact be reasonable. The Ontario Federation of Agriculture has suggested this change and I support it in that proposal.

I think that like other industries, farming should be required to use the most effective technology and the most advanced management practices, not only to protect our environment and to avoid nuisances, but also for the good of agriculture itself and for the good of farming, farmers and the farm community.

Under this bill, the board apparently has no investigative powers, so my question is, when a matter is brought before the board and when somebody is charging that there is a nuisance involved in a farm practice, who does the investigation? It is not clear from the bill as presented by the minister. It appears that perhaps the only evidence the board will have to consider will be provided in the testimony before the board. Perhaps that is not enough, so I hope the minister can clarify this.

Will the board have any investigative power? It does say in one section of the bill that the board can hire any person who has a particular kind of expertise to advise the board in resolving a dispute. Would that kind of person be able to carry out an investigation of the nuisance? I would hope so.

Also, under the legislation as it is now drafted, the board has no power to award a complainant any compensation if the complaint about the nuisance is found to be well-founded. All the board can do is order the farmer to remedy the offending farm practice.

In other words, in a case such as the bird-banger case, the board could say, if it found the practice being carried out—the use of the bird-banger—was in fact a nuisance, it could say to the farmer, "You have to stop using the bird-banger," or more likely, it would say: "You can continue to use the bird-banger, but you can't use amplifiers. You may be required to limit the number of times the bird-banger goes off in an hour, and you may have to put up sound barriers." But they would not be able to award any compensation to a person who has had to endure the nuisance in the past. Perhaps they should be able to if the board thought it justified.

As I indicated earlier, I also do not understand why the minister and his staff, in drafting this bill, limited nuisances to dust, odour and noise. There are other nuisances that could be brought before the board, and if what we are attempting to do is avoid court action—I think that is one of the main purposes of the legislation, to give both the people who are complaining and the farmer the opportunity to have some third party mediate a dispute and try to resolve a dispute to avoid them having to go to court.

Of course, under the legislation, it states that if one or other of the parties is not satisfied with the decision of the board, that party then can appeal to the Divisional Court. But that is very expensive. The bird-banger case is a good example of that. It went on for a number of years and cost the Saunders a tremendous amount of money, as well as the time involved. So we are trying to avoid court cases if we can by passing this legislation. If there is no ability of the board to award compensation, we in fact may be having more court cases. If the number of nuisances are limited to only these three, then we are going to have probably court cases about other nuisances.

I am sure ministry staff will understand that is possible and not simply say it is not likely to happen, because the bird-banger case is perhaps the most celebrated but is not the only one; we have had cases of people complaining in the Maritimes about farm practices and so on.

#### 1540

I use the example I referred to earlier. If someone is spraying a pesticide on a crop and that pesticide drifts over on to a neighbour's lawn or affects his flower garden, that is a nuisance; at least the person who has had his lawn and flower garden affected would probably consider it a nuisance. We do not want to have this person who is feeling aggrieved have to go to court to resolve this nuisance.

What I would prefer, and I am sure my friend would agree with me that it would be better, is if that person could simply go to his neighbour and say: "Look, your spray came across the fence and affected my garden. Are you prepared to help me resolve this problem?" and have the two of them resolve it. But if they cannot do that, I would prefer to have them go to a board rather than go to court, or even worse, go to their municipal council and ask the municipal council to pass a bylaw prohibiting the farmer from using this pesticide spray, because that could happen. And unless the pesticide smells or unless the aerial sprayer makes a lot of noise, it is not covered by this legislation.



There are a number of other small things in the bill that I would like to mention before I close.

This is a very minor one, but for one thing, in section 1 of the bill the drafter misspelled the word "silvicultural." I hope that will be changed when we come to the final draft. "Silvicultural" is not spelled with an A; it is spelled with an I.

**Mr. Villeneuve:** Coming from a former teacher.

**Mr. Wildman:** This is coming from not just someone who is a former teacher, but from someone in the north who is very concerned about silviculture.

I have said also that I think the bill should be amended to change, throughout the bill, wherever it says "normal farm practice" to "reasonable." Obviously, under section 1, the term "reasonable" will have to be defined just as "normal farm practice" is defined.

I think farmers should be using, as it states in the bill, proper methods. I think they also should be efficient and effective and should be employing the best technology they can and the best management practices they can in order to ensure not only the efficiency of their operation, but also the elimination of nuisances.

All sections of the bill that refer only to "odour, noise or dust," as I mentioned, should be changed to just refer to "nuisance," in my view. Although I am not a lawyer, I am advised by legislative counsel that "nuisance" is a common legal term and is understandable by people in the legal profession. As I indicated earlier as well, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture would like to see this change and I support it in that.

As well, what I would like to see is that under section 3, where it states who can be appointed to the board, it should indicate that the people appointed by the minister to the board should have some experience and knowledge of farm practices. Also, hopefully, as the federation of agriculture has suggested, they should be appointed to represent various regional parts of Ontario so that we will have a good representation of people who are interested in agriculture and in resolving these disputes.

Also, there is a suggestion we should change the number required for a quorum. I do not understand why in clause 4(1)(a) the bill states that there should be a request from "an aggrieved person." Does that mean that only a person who actually has experienced the nuisance and is complaining could then bring a matter before the board? Could not the farmer, for instance, bring a matter before the board? The farmer in that sense would not be an aggrieved person, except, I

suppose, if he was aggrieved about the complaints. It would seem sensible to me not to have the term "aggrieved" in there, but just to allow "a person," because keep in mind the bill sets out that the board will have the right to decide if there is a trivial matter, and not proceed.

I am not suggesting we should open it up for all kinds of people just to bring matters before the board for any silly reason. It is just to allow people who are not themselves aggrieved, but have a legitimate concern about a nuisance, to bring a matter before the board.

Under the act, I have not been able to find any section of the bill that says what the board can do or what anybody can do if the board has issued an order, but the order has not been complied with. The Ontario Federation of Agriculture has suggested there should be a new section of the bill that would indicate that if an individual has not complied with an order, despite the fact that person may have been given advice by someone hired by the board on how to comply, then he should be subject to court action, and if convicted, subject to a fine.

In that way, the board would have some way of enforcing its orders and ensuring people comply with them. I do not like this kind of approach, generally. I would rather resolve things by reasonable discussion, but if that is not possible then it really often becomes necessary for quasi-judicial tribunals to have the option of enforcement by fines. I do not understand why that is not included in this legislation, because it would be silly to have a bill passed in this House that purports to set up a system for resolving these disputes, and then have people just flout the orders of the board and not carry them out and have no option for taking action in that case.

I think there are other changes that will be considered in committee. As the minister indicated, he has a minor amendment he wishes to put. I will have a number of amendments along the lines I have just outlined. I apologize to the House and to the minister for not having them ready now so that he could peruse them, but as all of us know, the decision to proceed with the agricultural legislation this week was something that was taken after the OFA met with the cabinet and the two opposition parties. All three House leaders met and agreed to put aside the legislation on workers' compensation so that we could deal with the agricultural bills.

As a result, I have not yet prepared my amendments, and also, I was hoping that through discussions between the interested parties, the federation and the ministry, the ministry might



be prepared to move and bring in some of the amendments that were requested by the OFA. It appears at this point, since the minister has indicated that he has only one amendment, that that is not going to happen.

**1550**

As a result, I will be introducing these amendments if the legislation passes second reading. Those amendments are currently being prepared for me by legislative counsel, and I will present them to the table and to the minister as soon as I can. I hope to have them ready tomorrow or early next week.

In my view, Bill 83 in its current form is inadequate. I do not think it pleases anyone, frankly. The farm community and farmers want right-to-farm legislation. This House has indicated in the past that the members of the House unanimously support the need for right-to-farm legislation.

I do not think that Bill 83 meets the requirements. It will please neither the farmers, unless it is amended, nor those people who might be concerned about nuisances produced by farm practices, whether they be ex-urban neighbours of farmers in the rural community or whether they be environmentalists or interest groups or whatever.

For those reasons, regretfully, on second reading, I will be opposing the legislation and the members of my caucus will be opposing the legislation. I understand numbers and I think it is likely—although you never know—that even though we do not support the bill as drafted, it might pass on second reading.

**Mr. Villeneuve:** It just might.

**Mr. Wildman:** It just might, and if by some fluke it passes on second reading, if my arguments about why the bill is wanting have not won over everyone on the other side or even a significant number on the other side—

**Mr. Villeneuve:** You wouldn't be too disappointed.

**Mr. Wildman:** I won't be too disappointed, no; and if it passes, then I hope we can have a serious debate in committee about the changes that are needed in the legislation so that we can make it better, make it do what it purports to do and make it a piece of legislation that will resolve disputes and be accepted by all of the various interested parties in these areas.

I thank the members of the House for their kindness in listening to me croak away this afternoon without too many interjections so that I did not have to raise my voice above the noise.

**Mr. Villeneuve:** It is also a pleasure for me to participate in the debate on Bill 83. I hope that the minister's colleagues do have more interest in this bill than is shown in this Legislature this afternoon. I see the minister, who is also a farmer. I see the Minister of Education (Mr. Ward) here. I see the Minister of Agriculture and Food's parliamentary assistant. I see a farmer from Don Mills and a farmer from Cornwall, and that is all the Liberal members we have here. I do hope the minister's caucus takes this legislation more seriously.

I am pleased to see Bill 83 come to the fore. I took time to participate in the minister's task force report and did address the task force when it visited Kemptville almost two years ago, gathering information across the province in preparation for this legislation.

Agricultural producers feel threatened by existing nuisance legislation, as it does little to recognize the implications of operating modern farms. Ontario farmers have been lobbying for legislation to reduce the threat of legal action due to conflicts between themselves and nonfarm rural residents.

A court case in New Brunswick, the ruling in favour of a nonfarmer, has brought the issue to the fore once again, and I believe we have had court action, litigation, regarding bird-bangers settled very recently right here in Ontario.

In eastern Ontario, adjacent to my own riding, the minister is probably aware of pending litigation that involves dairy cows carrying cowbells, but cowbells that are a little different: they are chime-type bells. That is before the courts now. It is not an issue I am going to take sides on, but it is an issue that concerns all agricultural people, and certainly concerns those who derive their living from tillage of the soil and caring for livestock.

In the United States, right-to-farm legislation is popular; there are more than 35 pieces of state-level legislation. However, most of these items of legislation have been criticized as being vague and general, and few have been tested in the courts.

Other limitations suggest it would be premature for Ontario to take a statutory approach to this problem. However, I believe that with all the litigation and possible litigation which could occur, we will support second reading of this legislation with the intent of sending it to a committee of the Legislature, the standing committee on resources development, so we can listen to the concerns not only of people who are involved directly, farmers, but also people who



would provide some valuable input about what should be contained in Bill 83, An Act respecting the Protection of Farm Practices.

I firmly believe that Ontario, vast as it is, with the great agriculture we have, faces different problems in different sections. I firmly believe that the eastern section of our province, the northern section of our province, the central section of our province and the southwestern section of our province all face different types of problems as they pertain to agriculture, and I think this should be recognized in Bill 83.

I think the minister's task force did a commendable job, but that was only the beginning. I foresee that the standing committee of this Legislature will correct some of the problems I still see in Bill 83. I will be commenting on some of the amendments I will be bringing forth. I have tabled most of these amendments and I believe the minister has a copy of them. They address some of the concerns I and my party have.

One of the areas of concern that is not addressed is intervener funding through the Ministry of the Environment. I often wonder if the government of Ontario, through intervener funding, will be assisting groups of people who are challenging agriculture and farmers on their method of making a living, their method of tilling the soil and caring for livestock.

I believe the food land guidelines have done a considerable amount, and I know the minister is actively looking at changing some of the food land guidelines that now exist.

I can tell him there are many areas, particularly in the eastern section of this province, which have a lot of marginal land that the municipalities and all concerned would quite willingly see developed into rural, nonfarm residences; residences that may have an acre or two acres of land attached to them; residences that would be serviced by existing roads; and potential residents in these newly created homes who would look after their own well, their own sewage disposal and enhance our rural environment. In many instances, particularly where a large tract of marginal land exists, I do not believe it would create any problems for agriculture.

In my presentation to the minister's task force in Kemptville, I urged the ministry to look seriously at the possibility of a cloud on title when creating new severances in rural Ontario, a cloud that would effectively say that the owner of this property would not challenge adjoining agriculturalists, adjoining farmers, if they were indeed acting in a normal, acceptable agricultural fashion. I understand there may be some legal

problems in that, but I still maintain that this would be a way of looking after that particular problem.

**1600**

If I buy a parcel of land and there is a Bell Canada or an Ontario Hydro right of way on it, I simply buy with that condition attached. The case of any purchaser purchasing land where there are rights or privileges for public utilities—common driveways are another example—we could look at that quite seriously, and I think that is a very real possibility of addressing part of the problem.

The makeup of the Farm Practices Protection Board is also of great concern to me and my party. I believe five members to be a minimum. I would like to see a few more. Having been a member of the Ontario Farm Machinery Board, a board that has operated in the past in a very similar fashion to the way I think the Farm Practices Protection Board will be operating in the future, it concerns me when I see only five members.

Second, with respect to the makeup of this board, I would like to see at least a majority of people with direct agricultural experience or, indeed, farmers themselves actively involved in farming. I think it is most important. You have to be one to understand some of the problems that can and inevitably do occur. I certainly do not want to see Bill 83 become a problem to our people in agriculture—in other words, where it is another set of rules that they have to abide by in order to earn a living.

My concern was in part addressed by the minister during estimates of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food in 1985. I quote directly from one of his answers to a question of mine, in Hansard, December 3, 1985. "When you say 'right to farm,' the farmer has to meet all the criteria, the i's have to be dotted and the t's crossed."

That was my statement. The minister's statement:

"The farmer would be required to carry out normal farming practices. If he decides to spread manure on a day when the wind is going to take it into a residential area, I do not consider that a normal farming practice and I think the farmer has to share some responsibility in this whole matter."

That concerns me. That was a statement by the minister himself on December 3, 1985, recorded in Hansard. I do not know. I as a farmer can tell him that earning a living at that profession is quite difficult when you have to consider the



elements and the markets. If one now has to take a look at which way the wind is blowing to decide on what he will be doing that day, when indeed he should possibly be emptying that manure pit, it makes me wonder—

**Mr. Pollock:** That is when you call elections to find out how the wind is blowing.

**Mr. Villeneuve:** That is what you call taking polls. I hope a farmer does not have to take a poll to decide what he will be doing on a particular day.

As the minister knows, we have had a very wet fall in eastern Ontario and probably the same all across Ontario. For those of our farmers who are able to be emptying a manure pit right now, if the weather is suitable to do it and the fields are sufficiently dry to be able to perform that duty, I would certainly not like a situation where, because of Bill 83, these farmers would not be able to perform their normal duty of spreading barnyard manure on the field, because the wind happened to be coming from the wrong direction.

I would like to mention another interesting phenomenon. I have many city friends and, of course, they like to come out to the country. Yes, they know there is manure out there and they know there is noise. They know that at times there is dust. However, living in the sheltered area of the city, they do not get exposed to this that often. I have seen it happen on a number of occasions that when a farmer was going down the road with a load of manure that came out of a manure pit—very normal, common, everyday stuff to us fellows who live out in rural Ontario—the first statement was: “Look at the pollution. What kind of smell is that?”

That was someone who was really saying, “You know, it’s great to live in rural Ontario,” until all of a sudden he came upon the real thing and the real smell and the real material was there. “They are putting that on the land? They are polluting the land.” No, that is your organic farming. That is fertilizer. That is what will grow you next year’s crop.

It is difficult to understand yet easy for them to say until such time as they are put in place. “Oh, this manure doesn’t smell all that good.” They probably thought the manure smelled a bit like the pile of compost in their garden, which they could smell a bit, but certainly they did not realize that it was just a little heavier than that. These are some of the things and some of the realities that Bill 83 and its regulations will have to live with.

I will touch on some of the amendments that I and my party will be bringing forth. They are

amendments that I feel will clarify, to a good degree, Bill 83 and, indeed, protect the very people it is intended to protect and not create more hoops and barriers for people who provide all of the quality food that we here in Ontario enjoy at a very reasonable price and also are able to export a good bit of to contribute to the economic wellbeing of this province.

One of my amendments will be a definition of a normal farm practice. I think my colleague the member for Algoma (Mr. Wildman) touched on it. I would like to be able to see a farmer who may be doing something somewhat different from what most of his neighbours are doing—maybe he is in a different type of endeavour than most of his neighbours are in, and therefore he would not be quite normal to that particular area—have an opinion from the board as to what is acceptable to the board and what he possibly has to change. Or has he got a clean bill of health, so to speak, in living within the regulations of Bill 83? I think that is most important, because certainly it is better to correct a bit than to be faced with a major problem and all of a sudden be left to the whims of the interpretation of different people.

The definition of “person,” I think, has to be clarified to some degree, because we have some unincorporated associations and a number of legal entities, offshoots of these, that I believe have to be clarified in Bill 83.

Credentials of the members of the board: I would very much like to see some clarification here, because the board members, in effect, will be the ones who make Bill 83 work or have it damned by the rural population and our agricultural community. I would like to see some credentials, some requirements set out for those who will be members of the board. I would like to see the quorum increased from just the chairman and one member to at least three members—I think that is kind of important—and I also would like to see the number go from five to at least seven or possibly eight. It should allow a farmer to bring his own farming practices to the board at any time he so desires so that it could provide him with some guidelines.

We should make the board the first forum of dispute. This is kind of a difficult one, and I do not know what will happen. Should the board render a decision that possibly is not satisfactory to the farmer, what is his next process? I presume it would be the courts of the province. Would it be a trial *de novo*—in other words, what was discussed and presented at the board would not be used again in the courts of law? I believe this is a grey area. Certainly not being trained in legal



matters, I would like to obtain some direction from the ministry and from the minister in order to further clarify what happens, if the board is not able to arrive at a satisfactory judgement, in the event of litigation and court action. Would the statements and the findings of the board be used in any way or would it simply be a trial de novo?

1610

I believe I will close. I have a number of items of correspondence from a number of concerned people, including the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario. It outlines a number of concerns. It presented this document to myself and members of our party earlier this year on the right-to-farm issue. It states simply that: "The future lies with agricultural preserves and land trusts. Can we assume that significant initiatives are in place to pursue these options." Certainly, I am sure we will be hearing from the Christian Farmers as well during the standing committee hearings, which I hope will be occurring in the not-too-distant future.

In closing, I want to advise the government and the minister that we will be watching Bill 83 very closely as it proceeds through committee, and certainly we will be striving towards assisting farmers and assisting agriculture in times that are most difficult so that Bill 83 does not become a burden to agriculture, but indeed provides a vehicle to assist them in earning a living and continuing to provide this province with a buoyant farming economy.

**Hon. Mr. Riddell:** I do want to thank my colleagues for the comments—very worthwhile, I felt—on this bill expressing the concerns that they have, and I trust conveying the concerns that they have heard from members of the agricultural community or farm organizations, or whatever the case may be. They have indicated they are going to send this out to a standing committee, so perhaps with that in mind I can keep my remarks fairly brief because it looks as if there is going to be another full-blown discussion in committee, although we thought we had gone through quite a consultation process when we were trying to put this bill in place.

We have had public hearings on the issue of the right to farm. I want to tell the member for Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry (Mr. Villeneuve) that we are following legislative examples set in other provinces, so we have made a study of legislation that they have. We have even gone one step further than they have in other provinces by the establishment of this Farm Practices Protection Board to resolve complaints. In the

other provinces and other jurisdictions, they leave the resolution of complaints to the courts.

We think we have a good bill here. I somewhat regret that it is going to take more time before we can actually pass this bill into legislation, because I know that the farmers are most anxious to get this piece of legislation. But there are no guarantees or assurances that we can get at this in this session. I do not think there are any guarantees. I would hope we could. I will certainly apply all of the influence that I can to get this bill into committee and out of committee and passed into legislation. As I say, however, there are no assurances that I can do that.

With respect to the comments by the member for Algoma, he dealt to some considerable extent with land use policies. I will certainly agree with him that if we had had proper planning over the past and if we had had proper agricultural land use policies, the chances of ever having to introduce this bill would be pretty remote.

However, we have allowed land to be taken out of production throughout the province. A number of severances have taken place on farm land over the past. In many cases, a piece of land was severed to be used by the retiring parents on the farm, or by maybe a daughter or a son who wanted to come home and enjoy the country environment. We find that they would inhabit that house for a period of three to five years, and the first thing you know it would be on the market. Somebody from the city, clamouring for a country environment, would come out and buy that land, but would not be prepared to accept the odours, the dust and the noise accompanying good, normal farm practices.

So there is no question that we have needed good land use policies over the past. We have not had them. I will give credit to the former government for bringing in the Food Land Guidelines which I think have done a reasonably good job in some areas of the province. Some municipalities have incorporated the Food Land Guidelines into their planning process. They have taken steps to preserve as much agricultural land as possible. But I also know that other municipalities have chosen, by and large, to ignore the Food Land Guidelines.

With that in mind, we have been working on an agricultural land use policy, which I hope I can announce in the House this session. We are presently holding discussions with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs. But I hope that we are finalizing this policy. Once I introduce it in the House, as you people well know, it becomes a part of the Planning Act because there is a part in



the Planning Act which states that if a minister of the crown feels that there is something of significant provincial importance, that can become part of the Planning Act. When I do make my announcement in the House, it will become a part of the Planning Act. Then the municipalities shall be guided by that policy statement.

I agree with the member for Algoma that Bill 83 is really part of a two-pronged approach to rural land uses. The honourable member also said that nuisances should not be limited to odour, noise and dust. There could be other nuisance claims. The example he used was an aircraft maybe spraying a field of grain for pests or weeds or whatever the case may be. Some of the farmers now use aircraft to sow wheat.

I think you have to take into consideration that these are going to be fairly knowledgeable people on the Farm Practices Protection Board. They could well consider whatever dust there may be or whatever droplets that may be coming down from the aircraft and on to farm property as tantamount to dust. They will be able to deal with that. But if this aircraft is spraying an insecticide or herbicide on to a farmer's land and it happens to drift over to another farmer's land and kills his crops—and we are getting quite a bit of that taking place now; I am having lots of problems of that nature being brought to my attention—the member can be assured that the person whose crop was damaged has a good case to take to the courts.

1620

It becomes almost an environmental matter in that case. Not that the board cannot take a look at it, but I have a real fear that if they are spraying at a time when the stuff is going to drift across on to a neighbour's property and kill his crops, then they are going to be dealt with under the Pesticides Act or the Environmental Protection Act.

Farmers do not want to pollute. Farmers have made it abundantly plain to me that they do not want the right to pollute. As I say, this board will be very open-minded as to the kind of practices they will be dealing with.

The member also had some concern regarding the use of the word "normal." I think he is placing too much emphasis on the adjective rather than on the entire definition of a "normal farm practice." The "normal farm practice" is defined in section 1, as the members well know.

The "normal farm practice" definition does not preclude innovation in farm practices. It is ridiculous to suggest that would even be the case. The definition refers to "a practice that is

conducted in a manner consistent with proper and accepted customs," not just a reference to practices that are normally followed, and the range and type of uses are not limited. I think the member's fears there are unfounded when it comes to the definition of a "normal farm practice"; he must get his mind off the adjective "normal" and put his mind on the definition we have in the definition section of the act.

I was making notes as members were talking. I have dealt with the need for proper land use planning. The member for Algoma would like to see very rigid legislation on this. Let me put this situation to the member.

He represents areas like Blind River, Thessalon and Hornepayne. Let's say—and I know this is not the fact—that these small urban areas are all located on good farm land, and Thessalon and Blind River—just as Exeter and Goderich are doing in my area—are crying out for light industry, are crying out for more industry. We all know that if we are going to attract industry, we are going to attract more people, which means they are going to have to take land out of production because there is nothing but good land around there. I am assuming that. That is the situation we have in the urban areas here, in Peel and what have you.

Would he like to see legislation so rigid that the town of Thessalon or Blind River could not use any land whatsoever, could not take any of the good agriculture land out of production to use it for industry, to use it for residences, to use it for new highways if it called for new highways? No. I do not think that is what the member has in mind. Therefore, we have to be very careful before passing that kind of rigid legislation.

We think we have the solution to that problem. Members should just bear with us until they have a chance to see what our agriculture land use policy is going to look like.

They referred to bird-bangers. There is an example of how our protocols will work, the protocols we have established with the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley). We do have an understanding of whose jurisdiction this kind of a nuisance complaint falls under and will deal with it within our authority within our proper jurisdiction. Who sent me that note? Anyway, I agree with it.

The member referred to noise levels. I will run down these quickly because I think members do want a response. This goes back to our bird-bangers. The reference to 70 decibels as a noise level for bird-bangers is not in the Environmental Protection Act. The 70 decibels is in the Ministry

of the Environment's model noise bylaw. The Ministry of the Environment and the Ministry of Agriculture and Food are going to be reviewing the whole issue of noise from agricultural sources, so just trust us.

Some reference was made to the investigative powers of the board. The intent is to make the board informal. We have enough of this formal stuff. The people have to go to courts and all that stiff-collared stuff and all the rest of it. I look at the member for Cochrane South (Mr. Pope) as I am talking. But the intent is to make this board hearing as informal as possible. We want to encourage the complainant and the farmer to bring the matter to the board and to present their respective cases. This allows for quicker, less costly hearings.

The bill does allow the board to inquire into matters. If you look at clause 4(1)(b), you will see that the bill does allow the board to inquire into matters. But initially, I would hope that the board would not have to use this power.

The spelling of "silviculture"—we have already noted that. It will be changed. I have already dealt with reasonable versus normal farm practices. All these notes are coming, telling me I have to get along here. We have to speed the process up.

I think probably I have responded to a lot of the concerns that were raised by the member for Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry. On intervenor funding, there is no provision for such funding. The intent is for informal, less costly hearings to appear before the board so there should not be a need for that kind of funding. It should not cost very much money.

Regarding notices on title or a cloud on title, as you referred to, they are not effective in limiting complaints being raised by land owners. In fact, the Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations has put a moratorium on putting clouds on title. The members would not want me to do something that my colleague has put an end to. I am sure of that. We do not see this as the proper way to protect farm interests. It gives a false sense of security.

The member talked about the number of board members. The bill sets minimums. If I want, I can put 12 members on the board. It just says "a minimum of five." I have taken note of what the member has said and I appreciate his comments. I can appoint more than five members. A panel of a board hearing a case could be more than two, especially if the matter is somewhat complex.

**Mr. Villeneuve:** Are there going to be farmers there?

**Hon. Mr. Riddell:** Trust me. Leave that up to me. We have taken note of what the member believes the composition of the board should be.

Look, I had a whole lot of things I wanted to say but it is being sent to committee and I guess we will all have our second kick at the can at this thing, but we think we have a heck of a good bill. I would like to have been able to think that we could pass it and have it in the form of legislation, so that we could all go home and tell our farmers they now have the legislation they have been waiting a long time for.

With that, I will conclude my remarks.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. M. C. Ray):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Did I hear a "nay" somewhere here?

**Mr. Wildman:** I said "nay," but my voice is not very well.

1630

**The Acting Speaker:** Oh, your voice is not very well. That having been said, all those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Motion agreed to.

Bill, as amended, ordered for standing committee on resources development.

House in committee of the whole.

#### FARM IMPLEMENTS ACT (continued)

Consideration of Bill 78, An Act respecting the Sale of Farm Implements.

**Mr. Chairman:** At this point, I would like to make a list of the amendments that will be proposed and to which sections. The member for Algoma.

**Mr. Wildman:** I have an amendment to subsection 3(4), section 10, section 13 and clause 35(a).

**Mr. Chairman:** Do other members have any amendments?

**Hon. Mr. Riddell:** I have amendments for subsections 3(1) and 3(3), subsection 6(1), subsections 8(3) and 8(4), subsection 24(1), clause 27(i) and clause 35(p), unless I think of more in the meantime.

**Mr. Chairman:** Would other members like to modify other sections? Is the list that we have complete? Are we ready to look at these? Shall sections 1 and 2 carry?

Sections 1 and 2 agreed to.



## Section 3:

**Mr. Chairman:** Mr. Riddell moves that subsection 3(1) of the bill be struck out and the following substituted therefor:

“(1) A dealer shall not sell or offer for sale a new farm implement unless it was obtained by the dealer from a distributor or another dealer registered under this act.”

**Hon. Mr. Riddell:** Briefly, the technical amendment eliminates the need for a 90-day transition period and covers a dealer-to-dealer sale of equipment. The ministry will publicize the act in sufficient time to ensure the industry is aware of its requirements.

**Mr. Wildman:** We have no objection to the amendment and will support it if the minister can assure us that the dealers will have sufficient time to adjust. He said the ministry will be advertising. We see nothing wrong with this amendment.

**Mr. Villeneuve:** We have no objection to this amendment either. I think we will be supporting it and I believe it is a clarification.

Motion agreed to.

**Mr. Chairman:** Mr. Riddell moves that subsection 3(3) of the bill be struck out and the following substituted therefor:

“(3) A distributor shall not sell a new farm implement to any person except a dealer or another distributor registered under this act.”

**Hon. Mr. Riddell:** I am making this amendment for the same reason I made the former one.

**Mr. Wildman:** We support the amendment.

**Mr. Villeneuve:** I would like some clarification from the minister. We have many small equipment manufacturers. I have a letter from one here, Frey Livestock Equipment from Moorefield. The question here, as posed by Keith Reid, is that the wording of this section forbids the distributor to sell to anyone other than a dealer. Being an equipment manufacturer, probably an equipment distributor and an equipment dealer, can a short-line manufacturer, a manufacturer of equipment anywhere, be the manufacturer, distributor and dealer?

**Hon. Mr. Riddell:** To go back to subsection 3(1), “a dealer shall not sell or offer for sale a new farm implement unless it was obtained by the dealer from a distributor registered under this act,” or another dealer, so the answer to the member is yes.

**Mr. Villeneuve:** Could the minister spell out the fees that would be involved here for both a producer or a manufacturer. Would he have to be a distributor and dealer, or could he simply be a

manufacturer with the right to retail his equipment? Could the minister just spell that out, please.

**Hon. Mr. Riddell:** Is the member asking for the registration fee? If it is a combination of the two, it is \$300. It is not a case of charging \$200 plus the \$300, for \$500 if he is operating both. That is what we are looking at. Apparently it is all set in the regulation. What we are looking at is \$200, or if you are operating both as a manufacturer and distributor, \$300, but these have to be set by regulation. Those are what we are looking at.

**Mr. Wildman:** That is the problem. We have some real concern about the approach of saying it has to be set by regulation. I recognize you cannot have everything in the act, but in his remarks in closing debate on the previous bill in second reading, the minister said we should trust him. I have no reason to distrust him, but I do not think it is healthy to simply say everything is going to be set by regulation. We want to know what the regulation is going to say.

**Mr. Villeneuve:** I would be prepared to support this amendment if I have the minister's commitment that, indeed, short-line manufacturers can also retail, provided that the regulation covers it. Yes, I trust the minister. I just want his word here today that there will be no problem, that this can indeed occur.

**Hon. Mr. Riddell:** I think I gave the word.

Motion agreed to.

## 1640

**Mr. Chairman:** Mr. Wildman moves that section 3 be amended to replace the following words in subsection 4, “contain such information as may be prescribed,” with “be subject to sections 23 through 30 and shall be a requirement of registration under the act.”

**Mr. Wildman:** It might be argued that obviously, if the bill passes, any agreement will indeed be subject to the sections of the act. However, what I am suggesting here is that an agreement between a distributor and a dealer should be drawn up or drafted in this way in order for the registration to be approved; in other words, for the agreement to be drafted prior to the registration and to be one of the requirements of registration.

**Hon. Mr. Riddell:** I do not believe I can accept this amendment. I just want to indicate to the honourable member proposing the amendment that it already is a requirement, because it already says in subsection 23(2) that sections 24 to 30 apply to an agreement. The honourable

member's amendment would widen the bill to include any purchase or sale of farm equipment, whether the purchase was a poor decision or not.

I do not think we want to be passing legislation making management decisions for business people. It really does not make any sense to have to have an agreement before you can be registered as a dealer-distributor in the act, so I do not see a great deal of merit in what the member is proposing and I have to reject it.

**Mr. Wildman:** I regret the minister's response, particularly since subsection 23(2) refers to "an agreement that is in effect on or after the day this act comes into force." It does not refer to new agreements for new distributors and dealers.

I regret the minister has taken the position that he does not want to interfere in this way in management decisions. I see this as a way of trying to protect the dealer, to ensure that all agreements that are drawn up can be drawn up in this way and that this be a requirement for registration. I stand by my amendment. I think it would be helpful.

**Mr. Chairman:** Is it the pleasure of the committee that the motion carry?

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion the nays have it.

Motion negatived.

Section 3, as amended, agreed to.

Sections 4 and 5 agreed to.

Section 6:

**Mr. Chairman:** Mr. Riddell moves that subsection 6(1) of the bill be struck out and the following substituted therefor:

"(1) No person shall carry on the business of a dealer or distributor unless the person is registered under this act."

**Hon. Mr. Riddell:** Once again, this minor amendment eliminates the need to have a 90-day transition period.

**Mr. Wildman:** Just to show you, Mr. Chairman, how much more willing I am to agree with the other side than is the minister, I support the amendment.

**Mr. Villeneuve:** My only concern is when the minister says "no person." Does that mean there is absolutely no opting out? That is what I gather. You could be a corporate entity, you could be whatever, but there is no opting out. Is that right?

**Hon. Mr. Riddell:** We can find that at the back of the bill someplace. I cannot lay my hands on the opting-out clause, but the member is right.

**Mr. Wildman:** Legally, under the act, the term "a person" would include a corporate body.

Motion agreed to.

Section 6, as amended, agreed to.

Section 7 agreed to.

Section 8:

**Mr. Chairman:** Mr. Riddell moves that subsection 8(3) and 8(4) of the bill be amended by striking out "director" wherever it occurs and inserting in lieu thereof "chairperson."

**Hon. Mr. Riddell:** The minor change is self-explanatory. It complies with the requirements of the legislative counsel.

**Mr. Wildman:** As someone whose last name ends "man," I object to this.

**Mr. Chairman:** How wild.

**Mr. Wildman:** I just do not want to have someone start to refer to me in this House as "Wildperson."

**Mr. Chairman:** Rest assured that will not happen.

Motion agreed to.

Section 8, as amended, agreed to.

Section 9 agreed to.

Section 10:

**Mr. Chairman:** The member for Algoma had an amendment.

**Mr. Wildman:** I want to make some additions to section 10.

**Mr. Chairman:** Fair enough.

Mr. Wildman moves that section 10 of the bill be amended by adding thereto the following subsections:

"(5) Before entering into a sale agreement, the dealer shall ensure that the date of manufacture of the new farm implement is clearly marked or stamped on the farm implement in a conspicuous place.

"(6) A sale agreement shall set out the date that the new farm implement was manufactured."

**Mr. Wildman:** The purpose of the amendment is so that on the sale everyone is clear of the actual date of manufacture, the age of the equipment, so that if there are problems, the agreement will make clear the age of the piece of machinery. Subsequently, of course, when the machinery is sold as a used piece of machinery, a purchaser at that time will know how old the machine is. It is just to make it more clear and evident to all concerned.

1650

**Hon. Mr. Riddell:** I would really like to be able to co-operate once in a while with my friend



the member for Algoma but, from the legal advice that I am given, it is simply unenforceable. Some of this equipment comes from all over the world and provincial law cannot enforce it. Once again, dealing with subsection 6 of the honourable member's amendment, it is impractical and unenforceable, since most farm implements are not manufactured in Ontario. I would not be able to accept the amendment.

**Mr. Chairman:** All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion the nays have it.

Motion negatived.

Section 10 agreed to.

Sections 11 and 12 agreed to.

Section 13:

**Mr. Chairman:** Mr. Wildman moves that section 13 of the bill be amended by adding thereto the following subsections:

"(2) No dealer shall sell a new or used farm implement unless,

"(a) the farm implement meets such safety requirements and performance standards as may be prescribed; and

"(b) on the delivery of the farm implement to the purchaser, the dealer gives to the purchaser a safety standards certificate indicating that the requirements and standards referred to in clause (a) have been met.

"(3) The Lieutenant Governor in Council may make regulations,

"(a) prescribing safety requirements and performance standards for the sale of new or used farm implements by dealers;

"(b) prescribing the form and content of safety standards certificates; and

"(c) prescribing inspection procedures to be followed by the dealer."

**Mr. Wildman:** In the debate on second reading, I indicated that I was concerned about requiring safety certification on the sale of a new or used implement. While earlier in this debate I objected to setting things out by regulation, what I am suggesting here is that the Lieutenant Governor in Council should indeed be able to decide by regulation the safety requirements and the standards that should be met in fulfilling this section.

As I indicated at second reading, I believe that if we can have laws in this province that require safety certification for automobiles and trucks that are used on public thoroughfares, we should indeed be requiring the same thing for equipment such as tractors and combines that are not only

used on private property and on farm land but also, from time to time, travel on public thoroughfares. We already have regulations, of course, under the Highway Traffic Act for how those types of farm machinery are to be identified when they are travelling on a public thoroughfare.

I think that we should be ensuring as much safety as possible. It has been suggested that other sections of the bill as presented meet these requirements; I do not believe they do adequately. I think that all people, dealers and purchasers, would agree that we should be doing everything possible to limit the number of accidents on the farm, not just related to people who are themselves working on the farm but to people who are watching or in the same area, particularly children. One of the ways to do that is to ensure that the farm implements we use are indeed safe when they are purchased.

**Hon. Mr. Riddell:** I really believe that the amendments proposed by the honourable member are provided for in the regulation clauses 35(o), (p) and (q), but knowing the lack of faith that the honourable member has in regulations, I would be prepared to move an amendment when we come to section 31 of the bill.

What I would like to do now is send over a copy of this amendment to both the member for Algoma and the member for Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry to see if indeed this addresses the safety features that they seem to be concerned about.

**Mr. Chairman:** You also have copies for ourselves?

**Hon. Mr. Riddell:** I will see that you get one, but that does not come until section 31 of the bill.

**Mr. Chairman:** In that case, I have it.

**Mr. Wildman:** If it is in order, I was going to suggest that we stand down this section until we get to section 31. If the amendment proposed by the minister to section 31 fulfils the requirement, then we could deal with it at that time.

**Mr. Chairman:** Fair enough.

**Mr. Wildman:** I do want to respond to the minister's comment about me having so little faith in him. I have always considered him a great exponent of his party's position, which is not necessarily mine.

**Mr. Chairman:** Is there agreement among the members for the member for Algoma's suggestion?

Agreed to.

Sections 14 to 23, inclusive, agreed to.

Section 24:

**Mr. Chairman:** Mr. Riddell moves that subsection 24(1) of the bill be struck out and the following substituted therefor:

“(1) Within 90 days after an agreement has expired or is terminated, a dealer may by written notice require the distributor to repurchase all or any new farm implements and new parts supplied by the distributor under the agreement.”

**Hon. Mr. Riddell:** This is a substantive change that reflects my commitment to the Ontario Federation of Agriculture and to the Ontario Retail Farm Equipment Dealers' Association. It permits a dealer to require a distributor to buy back equipment where either party terminates their agreement.

**Mr. Wildman:** I appreciate the minister attempting to deal with the issue of buyback, which has been a matter of some controversy over the last few weeks. I understand that the minister met yesterday with the members of the executive of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture as well as ORFEDA and that the participants in the meeting were satisfied that the minister was going to respond in some way or other to the problems related to the buyback. I am happy we are responding in that way. For those reasons I will, on behalf of my party, support the amendment.

**Mr. Villeneuve:** I too am in full agreement with the amendment. I believe it firms up what had been a much looser arrangement. Also, after discussion with ORFEDA and the federation of agriculture, I concur with the amendment to subsection 24(1) and will be voting in that fashion.

Motion agreed to.

Section 24, as amended, agreed to.

Sections 25 and 26 agreed to.

1700

Section 27:

**Mr. Chairman:** Mr. Riddell moves that clause 27(i) of the bill be struck out and the following substituted therefore:

“(i) a new farm implement that was shipped to the dealer more than thirty-six months before the distributor receives the notice of repurchase.”

**Hon. Mr. Riddell:** This amendment is necessary as a result of the changes in subsection 24(1). It widens the scope of determination. Also, it changes the number 36 to be spelled out as “thirty-six.”

**Mr. Wildman:** Could the minister explain a little further why he is eliminating the last clause,

“unless the agreement is terminated by the distributor or the dealer has ceased to be a dealer.” Is it his view that this is covered by the change to section 24?

**Hon. Mr. Riddell:** That is my view and that is why I made reference to that section.

Motion agreed to.

Section 27, as amended, agreed to.

Sections 28 to 30, inclusive, agreed to.

Section 31:

**Mr. Chairman:** Mr. Riddell moves that section 31 of the bill be amended by adding thereto the following subsection:

“(3) No dealer shall sell or offer for sale a farm implement

“(a) unless the farm implement complies with the prescribed safety standards; and

“(b) unless the dealer provides the purchaser with a statement that indicates compliance with the prescribed safety standards.”

**Hon. Mr. Riddell:** I am hoping this addresses the concerns expressed by the member for Algoma when he made his amendment. This amendment requires a dealer to comply with the safety standards in the regulations and to indicate that he or she has done so or face a fine under section 34.

**Mr. Wildman:** I appreciate the amendment proposed by the minister. In my view, on reading this, it does meet the concerns I was proposing in my amendment to section 13. For that reason, I will support the amendment to section 31 and withdraw my amendment to section 13.

Motion agreed to.

Section 31, as amended, agreed to.

**Mr. Chairman:** We shall go back to section 13.

Section 13:

**Mr. Wildman:** I withdraw my amendment to section 13, as the concerns about safety requirements and the certification of safety are met in the amendment we have just passed to section 31.

Section 13 agreed to.

Sections 32 to 34, inclusive, agreed to.

Section 35:

**Mr. Chairman:** Mr. Wildman moves that section 35 be amended by striking clause (a).

**Mr. Wildman:** The reason I have moved this amendment is simply the concerns I expressed at second reading regarding the exemption level. To be very frank, I did not see how I could meet my concerns on the exemption levels being set by regulation by dealing with the bill except by



striking clause (a). It is for those reasons that I have moved this amendment.

In doing this, I am not attempting to remove all the possibility of any flexibility on the part of the people who are administering this act, but I am very upset and unhappy about the fact that the original, agreed dollar levels of exemption appear to be going to be different in the regulations than was the consensus arrived at by the Ontario Retail Farm Equipment Dealers' Association, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture and the ministry.

It has been stated that a new consensus was arrived at yesterday. That may be, but there are no figures in here about the levels, so the only way I see to deal with it is by striking this subsection.

I somehow doubt that the minister will accept it, but maybe by moving this amendment it will highlight our concerns about the regulations with regard to exemptions.

**Hon. Mr. Riddell:** I know my honourable friend likes to spell everything out in legislation. He likes the rigidity. But he also has to realize that as time goes on, things change. The costs of doing things change, and the prices you pay for things change. I would not want to put into legislation, say, what a registration fee would be, because I know full well that next year I will likely have to come back and amend the legislation, and the year after that, I will likely have to come back and amend the legislation again. So we do leave some flexibility for making these changes by way of regulation.

I understand from those who know better than I about drafting legislation and what have you that clause 35(a) is a standard type of clause in most legislation. In other words, it acts as an escape valve in certain situations. Let me use an example. If a government purchases equipment, it can decide if it wishes to be subject to the act. That is just one example that I use. Therefore, I would not be able to accept this amendment.

**Mr. Chairman:** All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion the nays have it.

Motion negatived.

**Mr. Chairman:** Mr. Riddell moves that clause 35(p) of the bill be amended by inserting, after "prescribing" in the first line, the word "safety."

**Hon. Mr. Riddell:** This change simply clarifies the standards to be prescribed.

**Mr. Wildman:** I support the amendment. Again, I think it responds to the concerns that were raised in second reading regarding the spelling out in the bill of concerns about safety standards. I appreciate the fact that the minister has responded by introducing this amendment. We will support it.

1710

**Mr. Villeneuve:** We will also support this amendment. Safety is a very important factor, not only safety for vehicular traffic along the roads but also safety for the operator and those people who work around this equipment. I think it is a most important aspect. Sometimes when we think of safety we simply think of the aspect of safety on a highway, but we have to recall that much of this farm equipment is very dangerous. The safety of the operator and of those people who work around this equipment is most important. We will certainly be supporting this amendment.

Motion agreed to.

Section 35, as amended, agreed to.

Sections 36 and 37 agreed to.

Bill 83, as amended, ordered to be reported.

On motion by Hon. Mr. Conway, the committee of the whole House reported one bill with certain amendments.

## MUNICIPALITY OF METROPOLITAN TORONTO AMENDMENT ACT

## LOI MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LA MUNICIPALITÉ DE LA COMMUNAUTÉ URBAINE DE TORONTO

Hon. Mr. Ward moved second reading of Bill 160, An Act to amend the Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto Act.

**L'hon. M. Ward:** Le projet de loi 160 modifiera la Loi sur la municipalité de la communauté urbaine de Toronto, laquelle prévoit l'établissement, à compter du 1<sup>er</sup> décembre de cette année, du Conseil des écoles françaises de la communauté urbaine de Toronto.

The French-language council will become responsible for operating all French-language public elementary and secondary schools in Metro, effective January 1, 1989. These schools now have 1,648 students and 90 French-as-a-first-language teachers.

This bill will implement changes that were recommended by a 22-member implementation task force formed in January 1987 to oversee the implementation of this new council, which on January 1, 1989, effectively becomes Metropoli-

tan Toronto's seventh partner in the federation of area boards of education.

The existing legislation applies only to staff hired before October 1, 1986, and does not provide for transfer procedures or employment security guarantees.

This bill includes provisions for the smooth transfer of staff to the council from existing boards, employment security provisions and the right to refuse transfer and covers all staff hired up until December of this year.

**The Acting Speaker:** Are there any questions or comments? Are there others who wish to participate in the debate? The member for Riverdale.

**M. Reville:** Monsieur le Président, nous disons oui.

**The Acting Speaker:** Thank you. Are there others who wish to participate in the debate? The member for Markham.

**M. Cousens:** Monsieur le Président, c'est un plaisir pour moi de profiter de cette occasion pour parler en français.

**Hon. Mr. Ward:** I'm glad you can.

**Mr. Cousens:** I wish I could do it better. I used to speak some French. To me it is an important language that we have all got to have a better understanding of, and if I could do it as well as my children do right now, I know I would be able to be as fluent as or more fluent than even the minister, as well as some of my friends.

There are a number of comments that I would like to make, and I begin by saying that our party will support the bill and support the principle of it, so there is no doubt that we are cognizant of the need to give this opportunity for teachers who are going to be part of this new system the chance to have protection, and that is really what it is going to provide for them.

I want to raise a few other questions around the whole issue that has to do with the provincial support for the education system in Ontario. I guess there is a question that would come out of what I am asking, and it has to do with the fear that many people are having across the province that the public system is somehow being undermined. It is a pervasive fear that they have, because what they are seeing is that, you know, after Bill 30 was passed, the separate school system became recognized and we began to do things there, as maybe we should have done a long time ago. Once that started to happen, one of the guarantees that was given by the government at that time, and even by a Bill Davis, back on June 12, 1984 or 1985, one of the things that

he said at that time was that it would never really cause any deterioration to take place in the public system.

I am sensing that more and more people within the province are saying that the public system is not getting the support from the government that it should. There are different ways in which they are seeing that, and maybe these are just the worries that are coming out in which the funding, for instance, by the province in the formulas for the local boards of education is causing the local ratepayers to pay an increasing part of the costs. It was certainly a promise that this government made that it would reduce the local ratepayers' share and increase the provincial share of the costs of education.

There is fear that the public system might be undermined with the change in the way subsidies are given through the tax base as a whole, the industrial and commercial tax base, and whether or not that is going to change in the near future.

I do not know whether or not the minister is going have to start looking at what is going to happen 10 years down the way. What we are doing now is responding in an ad hoc way to this need and to other needs. What is his long-term plan for education in Ontario? Is there going to be a time when he can say that it is the number one priority of the government and truly mean it?

That would mean that the finances of the government, the attention by the government, the consistency of the government are going to be directed to making sure that education is a fundamental priority of this government and is not just going to be something where the minister gives us the words in the House and says: "Oh, yes, Mr. Speaker. Don Cousens is leading people astray by saying that we are not making it a number one priority."

Well, it is not going to be the number one priority unless the funding is in place. It is not going to be the number one priority unless we begin to do something about providing schools and facilities for new areas when they are being built, instead of housing students by the thousands in portables. It is not going to be the number one priority if, in fact, there is a change in the funding structure for schools and education in the province that somehow again takes money away from the public system. I do not see this bill doing that, but I see this ministry as one that is not necessarily committed in action as it in words in making sure that the education in Ontario is of the highest quality.



As one who has served on the York Region Board of Education and was chairman of that board, I know how important education is. In fact, one of the testimonies is when you see the interest that is taken in municipal politics as school trustees. Really, there were so many acclamations, and many of the local ratepayers are very interested in what goes on locally, but the trustees do not seem to get the same attention in the media or at all-candidates' meetings or necessarily by the public for the important job they are doing. Someone has to have that genuine interest.

I see my very good friend the member for York Centre (Mr. Sorbara) giving me the indicator that it is time. I will not go much longer. I just want to ask the minister: What is his long-term plan for education? The words are one thing. The action to make sure that we in this province are going to continue to have the highest-quality education, I think, is important.

The fact that this Bill 160 will be approved with our support is an indication that we are going to be able to do something for French-language schools here in the Toronto and Metropolitan Toronto area. That is good. It also means that there has to be a restatement of the commitment that this government has to quality education in the public system and the separate system and that somehow they will receive the funding from this government that it should be giving them.

I do not think that is happening. The fact that the percentage of the costs for education is presently being allowed to be carried in large part, close to 60 per cent, by the local ratepayers through their local taxes is something that the minister and his government promised to change. He was not a minister at that time, but certainly the Premier (Mr. Peterson) made a commitment to do something about it.

We all know that we in this country have to do more to support all groups. I am pleased to see the action being taken here. It is working in Ottawa. It will probably be working in other places before too long.

I think the minister is very fortunate that there is the spirit around French-language services in Metropolitan Toronto. I think what we also have to recognize is that, as a ministry, it has tremendous responsibility to put certain things on the front burner. That has to do with quality of education and putting the funding where it really should count.

Is that going to say that this new board is going to be responsible for its own financing? I think

that is going to be good, because then they are going to have to become far more frugal, the way the public board is and the separate board is, and maybe there are certain things there that will make them very much accountable to their own supporters for what they are doing for education.

In the meantime, let's put the emphasis where it has to be: quality all the way.

**Hon. Mr. Ward:** I am delighted to have the opportunity to wrap up the debate on Bill 160, which is a bill that is establishing the Metropolitan Toronto French-Language School Council. I was very much interested in the comments of my colleague the member for Markham (Mr. Couzens), and I do not mind taking a few moments to respond to some of the very, very general statements that he had to make.

First of all, he makes a very valid point, that it is time we perhaps put aside the rhetoric and looked at specifically what has been accomplished in the field of elementary and secondary education in this province over the course of the past three years. The member is absolutely right when he makes the point that it is not just enough to state that this government views education as its highest priority. I think the facts have to speak for themselves, so I would just like to remind the member of some of those facts.

First of all, in terms of his concern over the adequacy of the facilities that are being constructed and put into place to provide educational facilities for our rapidly growing and shifting population, it is important to note that in the three years this party has had the responsibility of government funding for that very specific need, it has increased something like 400 per cent. I think that fact speaks for itself: from \$60 million when his party had the responsibility of government to nearly \$380 million last year alone. I invite anyone to look at the facts and not worry too much about the rhetoric.

In terms of the overall rate of support for public education in this province, it is interesting to note that in the approximately 12-year period from 1972 to about 1984, the provincial rate of support declined something like 16 per cent or 17 per cent. We put an end to that terrible skid. Over the course of the past three years, our funding for public education, through both the separate and the public school systems, has increased something like 50 per cent higher than the rate of inflation, some seven per cent last year and 6.8 per cent the year before. I think that fact speaks for itself.

In terms of new initiatives, our government put a very particular focus on the importance of

elementary education in this province and interceded in a way the province had never done before in the past, that being to ensure that children of a very young age, particularly primary school students, had the opportunity for the individual attention they need. We did that by introducing our initiatives for the reduction in class sizes.

The list goes on and on, from this to some of the new initiatives in technology and technical education in this province, the fantastic increase in the number of computers in the classrooms, additional funding for textbooks and learning materials.

I can only conclude by saying that I very much welcome the remarks of the member for Markham. I invite everyone in this province not to worry about the rhetoric but to look at the facts. I am sure they will conclude, as most people in this province already have, that indeed this government places its top priority on education.

**The Acting Speaker:** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

**Mr. Cousens:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I believe I am allowed to comment on the final remarks of the minister.

**The Acting Speaker:** The minister was concluding the debate in accordance with standing order 60.

Motion agreed to.

Bill ordered for third reading.

#### WORKERS' COMPENSATION AMENDMENT ACT (continued)

Resuming the adjourned debate on the motion for second reading of Bill 162, An Act to amend the Workers' Compensation Act.

**The Acting Speaker:** The next speaker is the member for Etobicoke-Rexdale.

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** The star of stage, screen and television.

**Mr. Philip:** Well, I do appear on television when I do not appear at the Liberal caucus retreats. I am pleased that the minister recognizes that kind of talent.

On a more serious note, it is with a considerable amount of passion and a great amount of concern that I rise to speak about Bill 162, An Act to amend the Workers' Compensation Act.

At the present, the minister might be interested to know that my staff and I are carrying some 267 active workers' compensation cases. We know from very personal experience the problems the workers in my riding are facing with the

bureaucracy, the insensitivity and the regulatory system of the Workers' Compensation Board.

I have been representing constituents since 1975 before the board. Indeed, that was at a time when we did not even have a budget for riding offices. Like so many of my colleagues, such as Fred Young, who was elected many years before me, I ran the riding office with volunteers and paid the rent from my own pocket.

At that time, we did not have nearly the numbers we are now facing. It seems as though the case load is getting worse. The problems are certainly not improving. While some credit can be given to the previous Conservative government for making some advances, we are still faced with a terribly bureaucratic and impossible system. I say the system is simply not working when we have so much of my time and my staff's time taken up with dealing with one part of one ministry.

1730

**Hon. Mr. Conway:** Pretend it's Sunday shopping, Ed.

**Mr. Philip:** I will be getting around to the Sunday shopping legislation, because it is the same kind of anti-labour legislation that this bill is about. I have met with the Union of Injured Workers and other groups and can understand why they feel so angry about this bill.

As a member of the standing committee on the Ombudsman for many years, I have dealt with the problems and frustrations the Ombudsman has had in dealing with the Workers' Compensation Board and indeed, the unwillingness of the compensation board to even accept the completely neutral and nonpartisan decisions and investigations of the various ombudsmen over the years. Indeed, the system was so bad that Dan Hill, on taking office, decided that it would be one of his priorities and did one of his systemic studies, one of the first systemic studies that he did as our Ombudsman.

As chairman of the standing committee on public accounts, and indeed before, as a member of that committee, I have dealt with some of the problems of accountability in the Workers' Compensation Board and the inefficiency of its management.

I recall the various debates on bills since 1975. I remember, for example, Bill 101 in 1984 and 1985. I remember that at least the government of that day, although somewhat reluctantly perhaps, did bring in some improvements, such as the expansion of the worker advisers.

If we look at this legislation, we see that the bill takes several steps backwards.



In 1983, the New Democrats, in a dissenting report on the standing committee on resources development, stated:

"The workers' compensation system in Ontario is not working.

"Discriminatory and inconsistent in its application, petty and inadequate in its coverage, clumsy and frustrating in its administration, workers' compensation has lost the faith and trust of the very people it should serve—the injured workers of Ontario."

I say to members in all honesty that this bill does very little, if anything, to change that state of affairs in any way.

This bill was introduced with the same lack of consultation with which the government introduced its anti-labour legislation, Bills 113 and 114. None of the injured workers groups, none of the legal aid clinics were directly contacted on the specific provisions that were being proposed.

I know the minister will say, as does the Solicitor General (Mrs. Smith), that somehow they went out there and, in a Gestalt kind of approach, they talked to injured workers and from this they somehow invented this bill. The fact is that at least the previous Conservative government, in the case of many pieces of legislation, would go through a process of showing the general proposals to the various groups that were interested, be they industry groups or be they groups of individuals or advocates for individuals. From that and from some of those hearings they would hold, there would come a more specific kind of set of proposals. They, in turn, would be sent out to committee and there would be more dialogue and a great number of changes, and from that, some legislation, which might be inadequate at times, but at least it had gone through a process of consultation.

To his credit, Roy McMurtry, I think, can be credited with having developed or at least having been one of the ones who used that kind of approach in bringing in some legislation that was controversial and that certainly did not meet with everyone's needs and expectations and indeed was frequently attacked, but at least they were consulted. Members of the Legislature could be part of that dialogue and make up their mind one way or the other and vote accordingly.

No such process was involved in this bill, so however you may feel about the individual provisions of the bill, you have to question the democratic process, or the lack of democratic process, the lack of consultation, that was developed.

The bill also fails in a legislative way. Many of the major changes it will bring about, if implemented, will work through various changes that will come through regulation. And thus, the Minister of Labour (Mr. Sorbara) and the Premier want us to trust them. They want us to trust those same bureaucrats, those same people who have been implementing the present legislation and who have been making the decisions which have been considered by the Ombudsman, by the various advocacy groups, by the legal aid clinics and by the workers themselves, as completely insensitive at times.

**Mr. Faubert:** We now have guidelines.

**Mr. Philip:** There is a difference with guidelines that, I think, can be found in a case where perhaps there is specific literature that is available, where we can say that there is scientific research that will show that here are the kinds of things that can happen and, therefore, the regulation should implement that literature at that particular stage of the art, if you like.

Indeed, the member for St. Andrew-St. Patrick (Mr. Kanter) criticized my bill—he was not able to persuade too many of his colleagues that it was wrong because they voted for it—that my private member's bill the other day was inadequate because I did not go into more specific detail as to the regulations, and I had rather left it to the scientific field and the professional journals and the ministry that had already developed standards, to spell out those standards.

That bill dealt with the care of animals. Here we are dealing with the care of people. To leave so much to the capriciousness of the regulatory system is simply inadequate, particularly when you have not, in the first place, consulted with the workers and with the workers' advocates.

So this bill is brought about without consultation and is brought about on an act of faith. Many of the new sections are subject to enormous discretion on the part of the board. This, I suppose, serves a purpose. It allows the minister a technical out. It lets him accuse us of talking about doom and gloom when those individual decisions have not yet been made. And of course, in the long run then, it will allow any unfairness to be blamed on the board itself, rather than on the particular legislation.

But I talk to my constituents, to those 362 or 364, or whatever the latest figure is—anyway, it is between 360 and 370 that we are now working actively on. When I talk to them, or indeed the many hundreds more whose cases I have handled over the years, they simply do not have that same

faith in the bureaucracy of the Workers' Compensation Board to come up with a regulatory process that will necessarily be in their interests. So giving more power without at least spelling out the terms of the power is simply an abrogation of responsibility.

I think we also have to look at this bill in the context in which it is presented. I was part of a committee that looked at health and safety in this province, particularly the health and safety organizations. To his credit, Elie Martel did a fabulous job at pointing out some of the inadequacies of the whole preventive system that we have in this province.

And we had thought, of course, that as a result of that and as a result of there being a new government that said there was a fresh broom to make a clean sweep of things, that there were going to be more innovative initiatives in health and safety, and that we would find a decline in the accidents in the workplace, that we would see an improvement in the environment to which workers are being exposed.

Indeed the Liberal government put it in the speech from the throne and said that on November 3, 1987, it would take steps to ensure a healthy and safe environment in the workplace. Since the Liberals formed the government, work-related accidents and fatalities have steadily climbed.

**1740**

The Workers' Compensation Board statistics for 1987 confirm this disturbing trend. If you look at workers' compensation claims, you see in 1985 426,880; in 1986, 442,080; in 1987, 469,681. In other words, there has been an increase every year over the previous year: an increase of 9.78 per cent in 1985, 3.56 per cent in 1986 and 6.24 per cent in 1987. If we look at the fatalities, which are even more alarming, then we see an even greater increase. If you look at 195 fatalities in 1985, it jumps then to 220 in 1986 and 238 in 1987. We can hypothesize all we want about why this has happened, but the fact is that there is an increase in both claims and, indeed, in deaths.

While someone may hypothesize as to why claims are increasing—and indeed some have hypothesized that when economic times get bad somehow the number of claims go up—we, of course, are in an economic time when there is lower unemployment than in the past and yet we are finding that the claims are still increasing. The one thing that cannot be argued is that the death rate is increasing. The death rate cannot be

questioned as somehow being directly related economically.

It is just like the problems in the health care sector. Rather than address the problem of health care needs of ordinary Ontarians and their families, this government has become obsessed with the cost of providing it. Rather than looking at the major part of the cost as due to their receiving inappropriate health care in a needlessly expensive manner, rather than looking at the way in which prevention or preventive health care can be used as a way of decreasing the need on the other, more expensive system, this government, in turn, tries to look at cutting back on the system itself.

I will be dealing with that in more extensive form hopefully tomorrow afternoon when we are dealing with the Ministry of Health estimates because I have, with some help from Legislative Library research, done some interesting work in terms of pulling together the actual dollar savings that can be obtained through investing in preventive health care. In the same way, this government has failed in its ability to deal with the whole problem of increasing accidents and lack of safety on the job.

If I had to describe this bill, I would say, without trying to be colloquial, that this is a bill that robs Peter to pay Paul.

**Mr. Dietsch:** That is not true.

**Mr. Philip:** One of the members says this is not true. The fact is that the minister himself admitted as much on June 20 when he noted that "The overall financial impact of these reforms will be revenue neutral. They will reallocate resources within the workers' compensation system." You do not need to be a member of the standing committee on public accounts to know what that means. That means basically that he is taking money from one place and reallocating it in another. My colleague the member for Lake Nipigon (Mr. Pouliot), who is the vice-chairman of the public accounts committee, is nodding his agreement that that is clearly what that statement means.

That pretty well sums up the significance of Bill 162. Every positive step is accompanied by a major regressive move, whether it is increased discretionary powers in the hands of the board and its functionaries, financial cutbacks, decreased access to benefits or what have you. What the minister is doing in this bill is taking from one group of injured workers in order to give a few benefits to another group. I say that is simply not what the various groups and task



forces had in mind when they called for a reform of the Workers' Compensation Board.

I just mentioned one of the task forces, the Minna-Majesky task force, which recommended that every worker have a total rehabilitation program, that is, economic, vocational, physical and psychological. When I talk to my workers, when I sit with them in their basements or in their living rooms, the major theme comes up: "We don't want to be sitting here day after day. We don't want those long, lonesome strolls around the block three or four times. What we want to do is be back at work in some form, maybe in an altered form, but what we need is rehabilitation."

Among the injured workers I serve, I have more people coming to me asking for rehabilitation programs than I have people coming to me saying: "My pension is inadequate. What can you do to get me more money?" I find that a lot of the people who find themselves on worker's compensation are people who, at least in my community, have come from other countries, have worked for maybe 20 or 30 years or sometimes even longer than that, have learned English as their second language or maybe as their third language, and have worked very hard. They are not people who are used to sitting around doing nothing, getting bored with themselves. As one fellow put it: "You know, I really hate going from in front of the fireplace to the fridge to the TV, to back in front of the fireplace to the TV to the fridge. It just is not my way of doing things. I have worked hard, in the most menial jobs, since I arrived in Canada, and I want to get back into the workforce."

They are asking for rehabilitation. They want the self-respect which comes from working and being part of the rest of society. Bill 162 gives the board continuing power to provide rehabilitation service if it considers it appropriate. In other words, there is no statutory right of rehabilitation as has been called for by various groups, indeed, by the Minna-Majesky task force.

In this bill limits have been placed for the first time on rehabilitation assistance to a worker seeking employment for a maximum of one year. There is a limit now which did not exist before.

Finally, the worker can apply for a supplement only if he or she has already begun a rehabilitation program, whereas at the present supplements are awarded if you are waiting to start a program. Considering the amount of time it often takes for a worker to get going on one of the rehabilitation programs—or to get slotted into one I should say; put the onus on the board rather than on the worker, who wants it as soon as

possible—it is definitely a step backward in the kinds of benefits being provided to the person who genuinely wants to get back to work and needs a rehabilitation program in order to do so.

In summary, what I am saying to the members of the House is that the constituents I represent do not want a handout, they want a hand up. They want a hand up back into the workplace and this bill is simply a regression of that direction. They want programs to help rehabilitate themselves to the point where they were before the injury or, if the injury does not facilitate that, then at least as close to that as possible.

#### 1750

The minister will tell us that the bill will oblige employers to reinstate injured workers in their jobs. Looking more closely at this bill, however, we find that those workers who are frequently the most severely injured, many of the cases, are actually excluded—I would say maybe half the case load I am doing, perhaps more; my assistant could give a figure on it. In other words, those who are in the construction industry, those 323,000 or so workers, will be excluded from that program. Then we can add the industries that have fewer than 20 workers—I do not have a figure as to how many are involved in that—and we can see that what we have is a direction of exclusion rather than inclusion.

We start off and then we say, "Yes, but all of these people are excluded from that program," often the people who are the most severely injured, those who are in the construction industries. The employer's obligation also lasts only two years. An employee can be terminated six months and one day after being rehired and the employer will have fulfilled his obligations under this program. The board decides if the employer has met his obligation, and there is no appeal mechanism on that.

What we have is a system, then, that fails to deal with the most critical of problems, namely, the problem of rehabilitating the worker, and the problem of getting that worker back to work as soon as possible.

No one has been more critical of the old meat chart formula for awarding pensions than I and my colleagues in the New Democratic Party, but what the government of the Minister of Labour and the Premier are doing under this legislation does not help the situation very much.

Under the current pension program, while current pensions under the meat chart are totally inadequate they are often, generous I guess would be the word—although the workers do not consider them generous—in comparison to the

new lump sum benefits. Under the new calculations, the pensions granted are much smaller than at present and the principle of a disability for life is destroyed since pensions under \$10,000 will be given out immediately as a lump sum.

The board appoints the practitioner who will conduct the assessments. You only have to talk to injured workers and their physicians to ask the opinion of some of those so-called board assessments and their doctors.

What I am saying is that the new benefits under this program will actually mean a loss for many injured workers. The bill says that if a worker gets a pension or is totally disabled for 12 consecutive months, he or she is entitled to a benefit, but the amount payable is 90 per cent of the difference between what the worker earned before the accident and what the board believes he or she is capable of earning after the accident.

This is what is called "deeming" and it is already happening at the board with pension settlements. In other words, the board deems a worker capable of performing a job based on personal characteristics, education, personality, etc. and then allocates a phantom job, whether that person is able to find that particular phantom job or not.

I say that what we have here is a bill that takes us several steps backwards. It is a bill that like the bills introduced by the Solicitor General and the Minister of Labour, are antilabour and anti-worker. It is clearly legislation the workers had a right to be upset about when they were before this Legislature and expressed, perhaps with considerable emotion, to the minister exactly what they thought about this legislation. It is legislation that unlike some previous legislation we have had, does not take a little step forward, but neutralizes

a lot. It takes money out of the pockets of one injured worker to put into the pockets of another.

I say to the minister that this kind of legislation should not be passed. It is a sham. It is like so much of what this government has done in the last few months. The government promises one thing, as it did in Sunday shopping during the election, and then does exactly the opposite six months later when it gets into office.

I find this significant. Coming from a west Metro riding, I am hearing this more and more from my constituents and indeed from their relatives who live in various ridings in the west end of Metro. They say they had hoped that with Mr. Sorbara as Minister of Labour and in cabinet we would see some improvements.

What we have seen since this government has had a majority is antilabour legislation. We have seen Bill 113 and Bill 114, which is clearly antilabour legislation. It is regressive legislation. You only have to walk into Ferlisi's grocery store and talk to any of the workers there, or Valencia's grocery store and ask any of the workers there or ask any of their families where this government is. They are saying, "My goodness, the Tories may have been bad but this government with Sorbara and the present Solicitor General is a lot worse."

I find it significant that both of the bills that are creating the most controversy in this House are bills that are basically opposed by the workers in this province. They are bills that are opposed by the unions in this province. This government is more reactionary, more Tory, than the Tories ever were and this bill does not deserve to pass second reading.

On motion by Mr. Pouliot, the debate was adjourned.

The House adjourned at 5:57 p.m.



**ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS\***  
(130 seats)

First Session, 34th Parliament

**Lieutenant Governor: Hon. Lincoln M. Alexander, PC, QC**

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# Hansard

## Official Report of Debates

### Legislative Assembly of Ontario



**First Session, 34th Parliament**

Thursday, November 17, 1988

Speaker: Honourable Hugh A. Edighoffer

Clerk of the House: Claude L. DesRosiers

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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Thursday, November 17, 1988

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayers.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

### COMMISSIONS COMMUNAUTAIRES DE RESSOURCES

### COMMUNITY-BASED RESOURCE AUTHORITIES

**M. Pouliot:** Je vous souhaite le bonjour, Monsieur le Président, en ce jour historique qui marque, je crois, le deuxième anniversaire de la Loi 8. On aura l'occasion, certainement, d'en parler plus longuement au cours de l'après-midi.

Mr. Pouliot moved resolution 50:

That, in the opinion of this House, the Ministry of Natural Resources, with the support and expertise of the Ministry of Northern Development, the Ministry of Mines and the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Technology should enter into agreements with municipalities for the purpose of setting up community-based resource authorities which would be given the right and responsibility of planning and managing these resources for the benefit of the resource itself as well as the benefit of local economies, and that the government of Ontario, with federal assistance, should make available to communities interested and wishing to set up such an authority, sufficient funding to enable them to enhance the value and maintain the viability of the growing forest by those who have a greater stake in its future than those who make the decisions in distant boardrooms.

**Le Vice-Président:** M. Pouliot propose cette résolution en son nom. L'honorable Député a jusqu'à 20 minutes pour faire sa présentation. Il peut en réserver quelque portion que ce soit pour conclure.

**M. Pouliot:** À ce titre, respectant l'option, je crois que je prendrai cinq, six ou sept minutes qui me seront disponibles à la fin.

There is a real and very justifiable anxiety that prevails in northern Ontario today. People are concerned throughout the north about our forest resource. Historically, the north has been dependent on its resources. We depend on mining and

we depend on forestry, and we produce across Ontario some \$12 billion of wealth annually; yet more and more anxiety is the order of the day in our special part of Ontario. The reason is very simple. For decades now we have experienced a cut-and-run approach to our important resource. We have not farmed our forestry.

I have some pictures with me that show some of the devastation. I should have had them enlarged, but I did not wish to embarrass the government. People who live in and represent northern Ontario have a sense of vision when it comes to natural resources. They plan. If you opt for decentralization—and this bill proposes to do that—the promotion of the north will happen automatically.

What we have here is called silvicultural slum—neglect, systematic, deliberate—and that has been allowed to happen. Consequently, there is an increasing body of evidence that tells us in definite terms that unless we choose to act promptly and decentralize the authority to manage our forestry, we will not be able to look to the future with any confidence.

We have some 60 communities with a population of 2,500 people or fewer that are solely dependent on the forest industry. It is the only game in town, the only employer, and yet in those communities, because we are talking here in terms of cyclical business, the rate of unemployment in some of those communities reaches between 30 per cent and 35 per cent. Those statistics are nothing short of horrifying.

Members will be most aware of the report that was tabled in May 1986, the report of the Advisory Committee on Resource Dependent Communities in Northern Ontario. This is what the report says: It tells this government that the outlook for the north is not encouraging. It mentions to the government that our population is decreasing, and yet we still produce \$12 billion of wealth and it is going to senior forms of government, going into the pockets of shareholders. We want to wish them well; there is nothing wrong with getting a fair return on investment. Our party has always advocated the spirit of free enterprise. We make no apologies for that, but what is happening here is that we have a one-way street.

There is less and less money coming back to the north. More and more money is going to the senior body of government and less money to access roads, less money to reforestation. We do not plant enough trees. We cut some six million or seven million cords a year in northern Ontario. It takes 60 or 70 years to grow a tree, depending on the species. It costs more and more to harvest what should be a renewable resource, but we do not do that. We do not put enough money back into the system to give us the viability that we should, indeed, be taking for granted.

What the committee says is that its opinion is that we need a major political and public commitment by the people of Ontario to give us a chance to encourage l'industrie forestière.

Vous me permettrez, bien sûr, Monsieur le Président, de déclarer avec toute la sincérité que je peux commander — et je ne parle pas en ultimatums, je parle sans menace — vous me permettrez d'essayer d'expliquer candidement au Gouvernement que nous avons besoin de planification.

On a toujours tenu pour acquis que le Nord était éternel à cause de ses richesses naturelles. D'accord, en ce qui concerne l'industrie minière, ça ne peut pas être éternel; tout le monde comprend ça. Mais quand on parle de l'industrie forestière et qu'on constate quotidiennement la négligence systématique et délibérée que nous avons permise dans le Nord de l'Ontario, on ne peut pas envisager l'avenir avec confiance, loin de là.

**1010**

Je sais fort bien, en vertu de la place que j'occupe dans le Nouveau Parti démocratique, que la chance de voir adoptée ici une résolution qui est raisonnable est minime. Cela, je le sais, mais ça, c'est dommage aussi. C'est dommage parce qu'on nous offre aujourd'hui, en ce qui concerne l'industrie forestière, deux choses. On établit, sans l'ombre d'un doute, que nous sommes dans un sérieux pétrin; que notre population du Nord, à cause de la technologie qui, souvent, est associée à des pertes d'emplois, avec l'influence du Sud de l'Ontario, avec une industrie soi-disant cyclique; que ces facteurs individuels, ces facteurs collectifs contribuent à une performance économique qui ne vient absolument pas près de remplir son potentiel.

Ce qu'on propose, c'est une autorité à l'échelle municipale, une autorité à l'échelle provinciale, une autorité à l'échelle fédérale. En somme, il s'agit ici de décentraliser l'autorité gouvernementale pour assurer un avenir prometteur. Le Gouvernement l'a fait à Geraldton,

mais, bien sûr, en temps de crise. Tout récemment, il l'a fait à Armstrong, où il a créé, à cause de l'autorité municipale, quelque 35 emplois. Bien sûr, vous me direz, Monsieur le Président, que 35 emplois, eh bien, ce n'est pas beaucoup. Mais quand on regarde les 35 emplois situés dans la petite municipalité d'Armstrong, on s'aperçoit évidemment que 35 emplois, c'est quand même beaucoup; ce sont 35 emplois qu'on n'avait pas hier. On a quoi? une population de 200 personnes, 300 personnes à Armstrong? Si on a 35 emplois bien rémunérés qui n'existaient pas hier, eh bien, c'est quand même beaucoup.

Mes collègues se permettront aussi, avec moi, de faire état, ligne par ligne, de ce que j'ai voulu soumettre à la Chambre. Il est bien dommage que, à cause de la partisanerie politique — c'est le parti que vous représentez, votre parti, Monsieur le Président — cette résolution, qui est à la base de l'économie du Nord de l'Ontario, n'a aucune chance d'être adoptée. Donc, je vais prendre l'option qui m'a été offerte et garder quelques minutes pour conclure.

**Le Vice-Président:** Merci. Vous avez dix minutes?

**M. Pouliot:** Oui, merci.

**Le Vice-Président:** En passant, si je peux me le permettre, par respect pour la présidence, on ne devrait pas faire référence... Je suis dans le fauteuil d'une façon non partisane. Je voudrais vous rappeler ça, Monsieur le Député. Le député de Nipissing.

**M. Harris:** Je comprends la frustration du député de Lac Nipigon, mais si le ministre des Richesses naturelles (M. Kerrio) faisait son travail comme il se doit, cette résolution ne serait pas nécessaire.

I really regret that the member for Lake Nipigon (Mr. Pouliot) has felt compelled to bring this resolution forward. I understand his frustration. I understand why this resolution is before the floor, because the Ministry of Natural Resources has completely and totally abandoned its authority, its job of managing our resources in Ontario. I do not believe they have done it voluntarily, and that gets to the heart of why this resolution is necessary.

What has happened over the past two or three years is that resource decisions are now being made by Shelley Peterson, by Margaret Atwood and by the Toronto Star. I want to say to members that this is wrong. The Ministry of Natural Resources had a proud tradition of balancing the various interests.

The member refers to decisions being made in distant boardrooms. I do not think decisions



should be made in distant boardrooms. I think the boardrooms of New York will have their viewpoint on their international companies, of how they would like to proceed, whether it is mining, forestry or other resources, and they will have valid opinions, which should be taken into consideration. The Shelley Petersons and the Margaret Atwoods and the Ministry of the Environment will have their concerns, but there should be an arbitrator of those opinions. When one becomes so strong that it is making the decision, then the system is out of balance and it is out of whack.

Some may argue that at some point in our history those decisions were being made in the boardrooms and it was necessary for others more concerned about the environment, more concerned about the long-term sustained yield, particularly of our forest industry, that those views were not balancing. I agree; there was a time in history when that was the case.

But that time in history is not now. Everyone is concerned with the environment, none more so than those people who live in northern Ontario, where the resources are. We all recognize, particularly in the forest industry, that it is not an infinite resource; that it is a finite resource which must be managed on a sustained-yield basis and the land use planning guidelines which were brought in in the late 1970s and the early 1980s by my colleague the former minister, the member for Cochrane South (Mr. Pope); that you must balance the other interests in forestry practice and in land use planning, the tourism interest, the recreational interest, the wilderness interest. There must be a balance.

The Ministry of Natural Resources, as the steward of the land and as the steward of the resources, ought to be given the authority to balance all the various interests and to make those decisions, and it must be held accountable. When they make mistakes, they must be held accountable. But I will say today that nobody can blame the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Kerrio) or the Ministry of Natural Resources, because the decision-making process has been snatched out of that ministry and it is being put into the hands of the Toronto Star and the Shelley Petersons and the Margaret Atwoods, and that is a crime.

We have seen decisions taking place in the Temagami area based on that. We have seen 150 jobs in Temagami, and they have said, "Hey, not many votes there for us." But if the Toronto Star reports that cutting a tree is bad and we authorize the cutting of a single tree, we will not do it. Then

it multiplies and it affects my riding. It affects many of the lumber operations in my riding. It affects MacMillan Bloedel in Sturgeon Falls.

It really comes down to a total abandoning of the government's responsibility to be the final arbitrator through the Ministry of Natural Resources. I guess it fits in with what we have seen with this government in so many areas. There are difficult decisions to be made. In the forest industry a difficult decision has to be made virtually every day, balancing all the interests and then coming out and making a decision.

## 1020

Since this government lost the decisiveness of my colleagues to the right, the New Democratic Party, who forced it to make decisions in the two-year period it ran things—I did not agree with them all, but at least they forced it to make decisions—since 1987, when it was on its own, this government will not make a decision. It appears unable to make a decision.

I am not particularly happy with this resolution. I have to tell members I do not think communities should be making these decisions. I would support the setting up of a community-based board to have input to the Ministry of Natural Resources if the Ministry of Natural Resources in fact were making the decision as it should.

I understand the frustration of the member, and I am going to support this resolution. I am going to support it because nobody is doing it right now. I do not think a municipal board is the right way. I see many problems with that. I see many local municipal interests taking the place of overall interests. Quite frankly, I would be concerned from the environmental point of view, the forestry practice point of view, the mining point of view, the aggregate point of view, about the decision being made by a community-based group which can see the immediate impact of jobs and dollars. I think there needs to be a more provincial authority looking at the long term in these decisions.

Why am I supporting the resolution? It is because nobody is doing it right now and I think it would be better than what is happening in the way this government is operating. I think it would be better than that.

I would assume the government probably will be opposed to this. In its opposition to it, I hope it recognizes why this resolution came forward, why the member for Lake Nipigon felt compelled to put something into the vacuum which exists there right now, and really looks inward at



what is happening in the Ministry of Natural Resources.

Those members who live in ridings in northern Ontario, outside of Toronto, who deal with the ministry, and their constituents deal with it on a fairly regular basis, know that those staff people are completely demoralized. Professional foresters with 20, 30 and 40 years of experience are no longer making decisions they should be making and they are demoralized. Whatever recommendations they make, they know are not being considered.

I ask members, if they oppose this, as government members probably will, to at least recognize why the member for Lake Nipigon felt this resolution was necessary and to look at what has been happening in the resource decision-making of their government. I know they will not do it publicly—I understand that—but privately, they had better start asking questions. This is private members' hour. This is a private member's resolution, and I really do urge those private members of the government benches to raise this issue in caucus, to raise this issue with the Premier (Mr. Peterson). There is no point raising it with the Minister of Natural Resources because he has been whipped. He has been taken to his feet and he has got whop, whop, whop, and he is down and out.

If members do not support the member and do not support the ministry, they are making a bad, bad mistake.

**Mr. Brown:** I am delighted to be able to stand and respond to the resolution put forward by my friend the member for Lake Nipigon. As members will recall, the resolution suggested that agreements be made between Ontario municipalities and the provincial government to set up community-based resource authorities.

We fully support the concept of co-operative resource management with local communities, interest groups and individuals. The government of Ontario has demonstrated that support time and time again in many of its programs and initiatives.

As a matter of fact, in response to proposals by several northern communities to establish community-based forests, the Ministry of Natural Resources is already actively investigating mechanisms that would involve communities even more closely in the planning and management of local resources. Also, several southern Ontario communities have expressed an interest in increasing their involvement in the existing agreement forest program in which MNR cur-

rently assumes management responsibilities for municipally owned forests.

In addition, the ministry is aware that many groups and individuals in unorganized areas would like to become actively involved in resource management decision-making. Our government, through the Ministry of Natural Resources, is continually exploring opportunities for co-operative resource management with local communities and groups to ensure the best possible approach. The Ministry of Natural Resources consults with many other ministries, including the ministries of Northern Development, Mines and Industry, Trade and Technology.

I would like to remind members that while the Ministry of Natural Resources is exploring various mechanisms for local involvement in forest resource management, there is already a variety of opportunities for communities and individuals to share in the wise management of all of our natural resources.

The Minister of Natural Resources has appointed a number of active citizens' advisory councils to provide vital consultation on such issues as the management of our fisheries and our provincial park system. The Ontario Fisheries Advisory Council was appointed last year to advise the minister on fisheries management policy and programs. Dr. E. J. Crossman of the Royal Ontario Museum chairs the council, which represents all types of fishery users from across the province.

The Provincial Parks Council is another citizens' advisory body that reports to the Minister of Natural Resources. In the summer of 1987, the council conducted a comprehensive survey of park users. Council members visited 54 parks, interviewed more than 650 people and 36 interest groups and analysed more than 1,000 written comments. The results were very encouraging. Ninety-six per cent of those surveyed were satisfied with the quality of their visits. Many of the points raised in the council's report are being addressed in the ministry's five-year, multimillion-dollar parks revitalization program.

The Ministry of Natural Resources also receives voluntary support in its provincial parks through co-operating associations. The Friends of Provincial Parks is instrumental in helping to develop and implement interpretative programs in such popular parks as Algonquin, Killarney in my riding, Quetico and Presqu'île. Of course, the ministry has very successful community wildlife and fisheries involvement programs in which local residents, municipalities, fish and



game clubs, cottagers' associations, naturalist groups and schoolchildren all have a direct hand in improving habitat and restoring natural populations.

The community fisheries involvement program completed its sixth year of operation in 1987 with more than 212 projects involving thousands of volunteers across the province. Clubs, local residents and even schoolchildren are getting actively involved in the rehabilitation of fish spawning areas or helping with restocking programs and much more. The ministry spent more than \$500,000 on community fisheries projects in 1987.

The community wildlife involvement program has also been extremely productive. More than 5,000 volunteers have logged 50,000 hours of their time on 172 projects in 1987. This program supports the Ontario lakes loon survey in which loon populations are being monitored by 600 individuals across the province.

### 1030

In the forest resources area, the majority of the ministry's forest resource program is built on co-operative commitment among the forest industry, various levels of government, special interest groups and individual land owners.

On crown lands, co-operation between the ministry and the forest industry occurs through forest management agreements. These 20-year agreements commit forest companies to plan and carry out the harvesting, regenerating and tending activities in their licensed forest areas. Reviews of these agreements are conducted every five years to ensure that companies are adhering to the strict ground rules set out by the ministry.

There are now 30 forest management agreements covering a total of 177,821 square kilometres or 69 per cent of all land under timber licence in the province. Forest management agreements are very successful at integrating harvesting and regenerating activities so that the long-term economic security of both the industry and the communities which depend on them is ensured.

On public and private lands, the Ministry of Natural Resources co-operates with local governments through agreement forests. Today, 55 of these agreements, covering more than 110,000 hectares, have been signed with counties, townships, regional municipalities and conservation authorities across southern Ontario. There is also a forestry agreement with one company in eastern Ontario and one with the federal government for the National Capital

Commission. Agreement forests are managed by the ministry through the provision of necessary equipment, fences and planting stock.

Finally, individuals who own more than five acres of land and are interested in reforestation and improving their forest areas have the opportunity to become involved in the ministry's woodland improvement agreement program. Under this program, private owners agree to protect their forest areas for 15 years. This includes buying trees for planting. In return, ministry staff prepare a management plan, estimate the cost of prescribed management practices and either do the work or pay for it. By the end of 1986-87, there were almost 10,000 active woodland improvement agreements covering about 140,000 hectares of forested land.

As members may know, the Ministry of Natural Resources is actively pursuing the continuation of the five-year, \$150-million Canada-Ontario forest resource development agreement. This agreement is scheduled to terminate on March 31, 1989. Through co-operative agreements with different levels of government, with special interest groups and with individuals, the Ministry of Natural Resources is continuing to build effective resource management partnerships.

In addition to its highly effective agreement programs, the Ministry of Natural Resources policy on integrated resource management makes public participation an essential part of resource management planning. The ministry regularly asks for public input on how local parks, wildlife, fisheries and forests should be planned and managed through ongoing discussions and through open houses and public meetings held across this province.

As the honourable members can see, the Ministry of Natural Resources is committed to the continued active involvement of the people of Ontario in planning and managing the future of our natural resources. The Minister of Natural Resources agrees wholeheartedly with the co-operative intent of the resolution put before the members today. The ministry is continually evolving programs in all resource management areas that not only embrace this concept but are much broader in scope than the resolution raises today.

Co-operative resource management is an integral part of the direction of the Ministry of Natural Resources and will continue to take place in the future. The people of Ontario have expressed their interest in a multifaceted approach to resource management. Just as our natural



resources overlap and affect one another, the ministry's management initiatives overlap a wide spectrum of both public and resource issues.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member's time is up, I am sorry.

**Mr. Brown:** For these reasons, I cannot support the resolution.

**Mr. Laughren:** The member for Algoma-Manitoulin spends 10 minutes supporting the resolution and then winds up saying he cannot support it. I do not know where he is coming from this morning.

I would like to begin my comments by giving members a couple of quotes. The first one is, "The waste and destruction of our woods has been so universal that I conceive nothing less than a universal plantation of all sorts of trees will relieve the situation." That was back in 1662. A second quotation: "We are wasting our forests, habitually, wickedly, insanely and at a rate which must soon bankrupt us all. Destroying a forest because we want timber is like smothering a hive of bees because we want honey." That was from a New Brunswick businessman in 1872.

A third quote, "We continue to live off our forest capital like an exiled Russian princess selling off her jewels one at a time." That was from a British Columbia politician in 1943. The final quote: "The existence of a perpetually renewing forest is seriously in doubt. Extensive regeneration at vastly increased rates is required." That was from a royal commission in Ontario in 1985.

For 400 years we have had these kinds of comments being made about the lack of regeneration in our forests. We cannot blame the mismanagement of our forests on the fact that we do not understand the need to regenerate; those quotes going back 400 years are evidence of that. We cannot blame it on the fact that we do not know how to replant our forests; of course we know how. In places in Europe, they have been doing it for centuries.

We had such a luxury of trees here, such a surplus of trees, that we felt we did not have to do it properly. We have allowed forests to be depleted to a point where jobs, indeed whole communities, are being threatened. The answer, in my view, is quite simple. If members would, I hope, listen carefully—I have listened carefully to what my colleague the member for Lake Nipigon said—it is to decentralize the management of our forests.

I believe that better forest management will not be achieved as long as our forests are managed by highly centralized multinational cor-

porations under the supervision of highly centralized, highly complacent government bureaucracies. Instead, we need a system of forest management that decentralizes control over the forests and puts this control in the hands of those with the greatest interest in maintaining a healthy forest, the communities that depend on those forests for their very survival. Decentralized, local control combined with strong leadership from provincial governments are the prerequisites of a well-managed, regenerating forest.

Let me elaborate on those points. I believe that for both ecological and economic reasons, we need a decentralized forest management system that is flexible enough to adapt to the needs of a specific forest. One cannot have a conversation about silvicultural practices without reference to the site-specific nature of forestry. Soil type and thickness, topography, slope, drainage patterns, watercourses, the age and mix of the forest and climate will all affect the cutting methods and regeneration techniques needed on a specific site.

Forest fires, disease and insect infestation all make forest management an even more unpredictable task. Proper forest management cannot be practised from an isolated boardroom or a head office. It requires an army of local foresters who have the desire, the knowledge and the time to get to know the specific forests under their care.

Beyond the ecological reasons, there are other factors that make decentralized local control of our forests the most sensible management system. Our forests are more than just fibre to be turned into next year's profits. Beyond their importance to the national economy, the forests are the life source of dozens of Canadian and Ontario communities. These communities have been built up around the forest industry. Roads and schools have been built and new small businesses established.

The very existence of these towns and cities depends on the surrounding forests being managed on a sustained yield basis. If regeneration programs fail, the survival of those communities is in doubt. Forest communities are also dependent on the environmental and aesthetic values of the woodlands to support the tourist industry, which is often crucial to their economy as well.

Who is more suited to managing the forest than those who have the largest stake in maintaining its long-term health? Decentralized control over the management of our forests makes sense for a number of reasons. First, it allows for the flexibility needed to adapt to the site-specific and



ever-changing needs of the forest. Second, it would put the management of our forests into the hands of those who are most dependent on the forest for the values it can provide.

**1040**

Let's look at the current system of forest management that we have in Ontario. Here, our forests are managed by large forest companies under forest management agreements. These 20-year agreements are negotiated between the corporate executives and top-level bureaucrats, and each agreement covers areas as large as 16,000 square kilometres. There is little or no input from the communities that depend on a well-managed forest for their survival.

Then the role of forest manager is turned over to the multinational corporations. Harvesting, regeneration and tending all become the responsibility of the corporate executives. One could hardly imagine a group with a more limited interest in the forest and with a more short-term view of its value. By their very nature, the goals of the forest industry conflict with intensive forest management.

The forest industry exists to make a profit, and by forest standards, a short-term profit. A corporation's main concern is that there be enough growing stock to recover the investment in plant and machinery and to make a profit over a finite period. This profit will be made on the current stand of trees, not on the trees that may or may not be growing in the year 2060.

Business concern for profit divides forest industry operations into two components. First, there is the mill or the profit centre where chemists, engineers and accountants pour their expertise and where new discoveries and new technologies can mean instant profits. The second component is the woodland operation, or what I would call the cost centre, where meeting government standards for regeneration is one of the costs of doing business, a cost to be kept to a minimum.

Even the concern for profitability is rarely tied to the profitability of one mill. The major forest product companies operating in Canada are affiliates of much larger corporate conglomerates. International firms like Canadian Pacific, Olympia and York and George Weston have planning horizons that do not include the future health of single-industry towns in northern Canada.

The track record of this kind of management is not good. Virtually every study on the forestry sector in the last 10 years has concluded that Canada in general, and Ontario specifically, is

faced with an impending wood shortage. Report after report has estimated that as much as one third of Canada's forest land is being lost to production because of unsuccessful regeneration programs. We cannot continue to put all our forests in one corporate basket. New methods of management, methods that combine local control with strong government leadership, are needed. That is why the resolution from my colleague makes so much sense.

Our provincial governments must begin to play a stronger role in ensuring a healthy crop of trees in the decades ahead. One way of doing that is as my colleague has suggested. There are other models that could be used as well to give more local control. I personally like the way in which the Algonquin Forestry Authority functions. I do not think we need to be monolithic or single-minded about the model we build. The member for Lake Nipigon has offered one. The Algonquin Forestry Authority is another model that I personally like very much, where it is run basically on a nonprofit basis, markets the wood, and makes sure the wood is cut properly and regenerated properly. I like very much that way of ensuring that our forests are replanted.

Until we design a system of forest management that combines strong government commitment to the forest with decentralized, locally controlled management, we will continue to have regeneration programs that are designed to fulfil minimum government standards rather than to guarantee a healthy forest for the generations to come.

For these reasons, I am proud to stand in my place this morning and support my colleague the member for Lake Nipigon, who I can say without hesitation has more trees in his constituency than people. As a matter of fact, he has more trees in his constituency than are in any other constituency in Ontario. I think he must have one of the largest constituencies in the province as well. I am not sure how large it is, but he truly has an enormous constituency and he has a very, very deep and abiding interest, as did his predecessor, Mr. Stokes, in the health of the forests all across northern Ontario.

**Mr. Pollock:** I would like to mention that I am really not the designated speaker on this motion. He did not show up. He must have got caught in traffic.

**Hon. Mr. Mancini:** We would rather hear from you anyway.

**Mr. Pollock:** Thanks. Anyway, I would like to say that I support this resolution. I think there should be local input on our forests. They are the



people it affects and concerns. I certainly agree with the comments of the member for Nipissing (Mr. Harris) and his concerns about the protection of our forests.

It has been said that insects destroy more trees in Ontario than man actually does. Therefore, we have to protect our forests from these insects such as the gypsy moth and the spruce budworm because they cause a lot of problems with our forests. It is a major concern of mine.

I appreciated the comments of the member for Nickel Belt (Mr. Laughren) when he paid tribute to the Algonquin Forest Authority in its efforts to actually protect and preserve Algonquin Park and only cut those mature trees. I have known some of the people who served on that particular forestry association and I think they are doing a terrific job.

Basically, that is all I have to say, and I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Adams:** The member for Lake Nipigon's resolution is based on the concept of a community forest. As a concept, this has a great deal going for it, the idea that local communities can manage the forest that surrounds them. In various parts of Europe, the community forest is commonplace. In the Alps, for example, in France, Switzerland and Austria, large tracts of forest are owned in common and managed by villages, cantons or whatever the local government is. The sides of the mountains in those areas are covered with manicured forests waiting for the villages to use them.

The concept of a community forest has real merit here in Ontario, but I know the member for Lake Nipigon knows deep in his heart that this concept cannot be simply transplanted from Europe to Canada. In Europe, there are centuries of common law behind their community forests. Centuries ago, for example, rights to private property and private use were given up in favour of communal rights. Similarly, the rights of other levels of government were given up to allow one village to protect its lands even against the better interests of surrounding villages.

Also, in Europe, the communal rights concerned are very narrowly related to forestry management and so these rights and these community forests greatly limit what we think of as multiple use of the forest resource or multiple use of all the resources of the lands concerned. We tend to think on this side that multiple use is most appropriate here in Ontario.

Lastly, the community forests of Europe, large though they may appear to the nonexpert at first sight, are tiny by comparison to the forests we

deal with in Ontario. I understand that 87 per cent of this province is still crown land. We have forests that are larger than whole countries in Europe. That huge scale involves an incredible variety of forest environment, of forest conditions. It is a diversity that cannot be addressed by one single, simplified, transplanted management approach, no matter how good that approach appears at first sight.

The common law situation in Ontario is special and it is already very complex. We have private property here and we have a very wide variety of well-established, existing, local forest management agreements. Many of those local agreements involve a great deal of local participation. My colleague the member for Algoma-Manitoulin (Mr. Brown) has described some of the existing management approaches that the Ministry of Natural Resources has developed with a wide variety of local groups. As he has said, the ministry continues to develop and study a diverse range of such agreements.

I have great personal sympathy with the intent of the member for Lake Nipigon, but he knows that we cannot simply implement one simple community-based approach. I hope the member's resolution will have the effect of increasing interest in all sorts of local management techniques, in all sorts of local involvement in resource management.

Having said that, I regret to say I cannot support the resolution.

**1050**

**Mr. Pouliot:** My good friend the member for Algoma-Manitoulin spends a full 10 minutes reading from a prepared billboard telling us about the reasons why he should support the resolution, but then, just as matter-of-factly, concludes that he cannot.

He cannot because: "I would have to go to his office with my ideas and come out of his office with his ideas and then, indeed, I would have a better chance. Of course, I cannot. It is a vision. It proposes an alternative. It defies the status quo. It has vision, planning. Promotion would follow soon. It would give us a boost. No, no. I prefer to sit in the near north in Manitoulin and count the 50 trees I have left in my riding," or maybe there are a little more.

**Miss Martel:** Fifty-one.

**Mr. Pouliot:** Fifty-one. "I do not want to go up north. I do not want to go to the riding of Lake Nipigon. I do not want to go to Hudson Bay. I do not want to do that. I prefer to say, 'Everything is well.' Like an ostrich, I will bury my head in the sand and expose my rear end."



No, no. That is not the policy of the future. That is not what he should be doing. He should travel up north and go to Domtar in Red Rock, then travel another 100 miles and go to Kimberly-Clark in Terrace Bay, then go into the forest, cut across and go to Longlac. Then he will feel the anxiety of the people asking: "Where are we going to be five years, 10 years, 15 years down the line? We must travel 100 miles to get a truck full of wood. Why is that?" It is very simple. Somebody has neglected the forests.

We have heard all the rhetoric. What we are seeing here is a new approach. It has been tried someplace else and it has worked. We want to give local people, the people of the north, a chance to make their decision. Had we farmed our forest resources, we would not be in this kind of dilemma. We would not face this impasse. There is nothing wrong in admitting, because the facts are there, that we have treated our forests and the people of the north in a cavalier fashion.

It is not a good example of how to manage and harvest resources: Cut and run; no planning for the future; decisions made elsewhere; as long as we can satisfy shareholders; the prices are up; play the commodities market; we are going to do well—but do well for a while. What is going to happen 15 and 20 years down the line?

We cannot go across Bay Street and get a job at the other bank. That is all we have. We keep sending \$12 billion a year elsewhere. We are getting some back, but we are not getting enough. It is patchwork. When the revenues are up, we get a little more, but there is no planning, no sense of vision and we do not have the feeling that the north is eternal. There are 51 communities in our riding alone. How many of them will still be there 10 or 15 years down the line if we do not farm our forests?

There is no need for that. We know that once is all in the mining sector; it is a finite resource. The first shovelful you take out of the ground, you are that much closer to extinction. That is a condition we relate to, a condition we accept in advance; but in terms of our forests it is an entirely different business.

With this resolution, the members have an opportunity to give local authority a chance to plan.

**Mr. Brown:** Local option.

**Mr. Pouliot:** I heard the member say "local option." He should be ashamed of mentioning those words in this House.

I have searched long and hard for flaws associated with the resolution, and truly, I was

unable to find any because it gives the recipe for a better future for the people of northern Ontario.

## COMPENSATION FOR VICTIMS OF CRIME

Mr. J. M. Johnson moved resolution 48:

That, in the opinion of this House, the Attorney General should review the Compensation for Victims of Crime Act to determine whether that legislation is adequate to meet the needs and redress the losses of victims. Such a review should take into account recommendations made by the standing committee on the Ombudsman (16th report, 1988); the standing committee on procedural affairs (Report on Agencies, Boards and Commissions 7, December 1983); and the areas identified by the past chairman of the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board as requiring special attention, (board's 17th report, 1985-86).

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. M. C. Ray):** The member has up to 20 minutes to make his presentation and may reserve any portion thereof.

**Mr. J. M. Johnson:** I will reserve a few minutes.

A headline in the Toronto Sun today highlights the need for this resolution. It reads, "He Could Kill Again." If our society cannot provide more security and safety for its citizens, and I strongly encourage it to do so, then we have an added responsibility to make certain that the innocent victims of these criminals, and their families, receive fair and reasonable compensation.

The reasons for presenting this resolution are many, but the most important reason was a very personal experience dealing with a constituent's need. A few years ago, a tragic case was brought to my attention by a young man, a constituent who was an unfortunate example of a victim of crime. I intend to be deliberately vague about the details of this terrible crime because this innocent victim has suffered enough and I do not want attract any more publicity to him or his young family.

This young man lived in a small community in his own home with his wife, his young two-and-a-half-year-old son and a baby daughter. One day he returned home from work and found his wife slashed to death, the young son hysterical and the daughter crying. Apparently, the next-door neighbour's son, a convict who had just been released on parole, had broken into this young man's home and slaughtered his wife with a butcher knife.

Imagine the terrible impact on this poor husband. His life was totally devastated. He had to give up his home and moved into my riding to



live with his mother so she could look after her son and her grandchildren. In doing so, she had to completely change her life. She had to quit her job and devote her total time to her son's family.

After a period of time, when he was finally able to accept the reality of the situation, through absolutely no fault of his own but entirely because he was the innocent victim of a terrible crime, the young man asked for my assistance.

**1100**

I appealed to the Ontario Criminal Injuries Compensation Board on behalf of my constituent. I was advised that they would contribute to the funeral expenses and if he needed psychiatric help they would pay for some sessions, but that was about the extent of what they had offered. When it was pointed out that my constituent's mother had to quit her job to stay home and help her son look after the family, they expressed sympathy. I suggested that while monetary assistance to the family would not replace the wife and young mother, it might alleviate some of the pressing financial problems created by this criminal act.

Unfortunately, the Ontario Criminal Injuries Compensation Board does not have the right under the present legislation to make awards based on cases such as this, which they class as pain and suffering. They give lots of sympathy but no financial assistance.

Two chairmen of the board, Allan Grossman and Margaret Scrivener, both confirmed this negative decision. Mrs. Scrivener has consistently requested a revision of the board's enabling legislation to address this very important issue.

I would like to make reference to the chairman's report at this time. It is the Ontario Criminal Injuries Compensation Board 17th report, 1985-86. It is addressed to the Attorney General (Mr. Scott) and it goes on to state that, "Since joining the board on May 1, 1985, and undertaking the review of operations necessary for a new chairman, three main areas requiring special attention have been identified.

"These are: revision of the board's enabling legislation," and that, sir, is the most important. The second is the "reduction of the backlog of cases;" and the third, "and certain administrative improvements." That is signed by the chairman of the board of the day, Mrs. Margaret Scrivener. I might mention that at the present time there is a backlog of more than 3,500 cases.

This frustrating personal experience dealing with my inability to be of assistance to this young family—a truly innocent victim of violent crime and in my opinion someone entitled to compen-

sation under the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board—encouraged me to work towards changing this legislation. I was also encouraged by many members of this Legislature, especially the members of the two committees I served on dealing with this board and I will make reference to these committees in a few minutes.

I might mention that I conducted a survey in my riding. It was a questionnaire that I sent out early in 1987. One of the questions that was asked was, "Should victims of crime be given financial compensation and restitution for injuries and loss resulting from the crimes?" Of the 2,426 who replied to this question, 73.2 per cent said yes; 11.1 per cent said no; and 15.7 per cent were undecided or did not respond. In answer, 1,770 citizens of my former riding of Wellington-Dufferin-Peel said victims of crime need more consideration.

I might make reference to an article in the *Toronto Star*, October 22, 1988, "Violent Crimes Up 92 per cent in Five Years." I will just quote the one paragraph, "Murders, sexual assaults, robberies and other violent crimes shot up more than 92 per cent in the last five years, a statistical study shows."

I might also mention another article in the press. This is Lorrie Goldstein's article from the *Toronto Sun*, May 31, 1988—"Victims Deserve Fair Play."

"Criminals get their day in court. So should victims of crime. As Attorney General Ian Scott attempts to clear up the three-year backlog of 3,600 cases facing Ontario's Criminal Injuries Compensation Board, he would do well to keep that in mind. Scott wants the CICB to handle a larger percentage of its cases simply by having a review of the paperwork involved rather than by holding full hearings."

I go on to one paragraph:

"In response to criticism that he has not adequately funded the CICB, Scott notes he has doubled its annual budget, now \$7.5 million, in two years," and I give the Attorney General credit for doing so. "Still more people are making claims to the CICB than ever before, and these claims are increasingly complex. Scrivener, a former Tory cabinet minister, pushed constantly for more staff and resources for the CICB during her term as chairman."

I would also like to make reference to a federal study. It was in a publication entitled *Victims and Witnesses of Crime in Canada* which was commissioned by the Department of Justice in Canada. I quote from one section which deals



with the results of a Canadian urban victim survey entitled Reported and Unreported Crime:

"The survey demonstrated that over one half of crimes were not reported. Reasons given for not reporting crimes included the view that the crime was too minor, the police could do nothing about the situation, that it was inconvenient or that the criminal justice system was too complex and too intimidating. Reasons for not reporting sexual assaults varied from the usual pattern. These victims stressed concern with negative attitudes of criminal justice officials and fear of revenge by offenders."

If half of all crimes committed are not reported, then it follows that half the victims of crime receive no consideration whatsoever. Surely this is an indictment of our judicial system and demonstrates an urgent need to address this injustice.

I will refer to a couple of sections from the 16th report of the standing committee on the Ombudsman, 1988. Subsection 17(1): "In determining whether to make an order for compensation and the amount thereof, the board shall have regard to all relevant circumstances, including any behaviour of the victim that may have directly or indirectly contributed to his injury or death."

When our committee was meeting this section created a very major problem and many of the members felt that indeed, if for no other reason, that should be opened up to deal with that section.

In the recommendations of the standing committee on the Ombudsman, number one states that it is very important, "That the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board award appropriate compensation to the complainant for loss of income and pain and suffering as a result of injuries sustained by him." That is the one that would have reflected on the innocent victim that I mentioned earlier.

There is another section that I will refer to briefly, and I will quote from the report: "In the board's view, this section" 25(1) "does not allow it to reopen a matter and make an award awarding compensation where no order of compensation was made in the first instance. The board," and that is the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board, "says that as there is no other authority in the act which can be employed to accomplish the Ombudsman's and now the committee's recommendation, the board is legally unable to act to implement the recommendation."

In other words, while the board supports the thrust of the Ombudsman and the standing committee on the Ombudsman, legally it has no

right to implement the recommendations. That is another reason the act should be opened, so that section can be dealt with as well.

#### 1110

The committee also suggests that an amendment be made to the Compensation for Victims of Crime Act by deleting the words "for payment of compensation" in subsection 25(1). The committee believes that this statute, as presently written, unnecessarily hampers the board's ability to re-examine cases where no award of compensation has been made. On behalf of my constituent I appealed to the board to give consideration, and this is the very section it pointed to. It was unable to comply with my request.

The committee recommends "that the Compensation for Victims of Crime Act be amended by deleting the words 'for payment of compensation' from subsection 25(1)," recommendation 9. There are several other recommendations and these can be dealt with by the Compensation for Victims of Crime Act when it is reviewed. Possibly some of the other members who served on either or both of these committees will make appropriate comments when the time comes.

I would now like to make reference to the standing committee on procedural affairs report number 7 on agencies, boards and commissions. This report was tabled in the Legislature on December 15, 1983. I will just make one reference to this report. I will quote this section:

"Criminal injuries compensation boards are a relatively new phenomenon in Canada. Most have been in existence not much longer than a decade and have operated within the scope of existing legislation. In the last few years, a debate has been initiated as to the adequacy of present institutions, methods and procedures in the treatment of victims of crime. A thorough analysis of these issues together with recommendations was recently prepared by the Federal-Provincial Task Force on Justice for Victims of Crime. The task force concluded that the justice system in Canada, with its present practices tended to 'neglect the needs and concerns of victims of crime.'" That is most important. We "neglect the needs and concerns of victims of crime."

"The recommendations of the federal-provincial task force will undoubtedly be studied by the appropriate Ontario authorities, the Attorney General, the Solicitor General and the Provincial Secretary for Justice. It is in the context of such review that the committee believes that a review of the Compensation for Victims of Crime Act be



conducted and that such a review deal with all aspects of the act, including such matters as the criteria for eligibility, maximum payments, the criteria for receiving compensation under the head of pain and suffering and other such related matters."

There were other recommendations made by the committee, but those are some of the most important.

I will just make one other reference and then reserve a few minutes.

At the present time there is federal legislation, Bill C-89. This act received first reading on November 5, 1987, and was passed by the House of Commons on May 3, 1988. Bill C-89 makes several references to supporting the need for assistance to victims of crime. I would just like to comment on two.

This has been presented by the Honourable Ray Hnatyshyn, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada. He says:

"I have offered to more than double the federal contribution to provincial criminal injury compensation schemes and to fund a new victims assistance fund. This commitment will involve \$27.2 million over three years. This is a near tripling of federal money in this area."

I will make one other reference. It makes three recommendations; this is the fourth. "They will require the courts to consider restitution in all cases involving damage, loss or destruction of property and bodily harm, thereby removing the need for the victim to apply for restitution."

I think because of the federal legislation, because of the two reports we have from the standing committee on the Ombudsman and the standing committee on procedural affairs and because most members certainly respect the fact that there is not enough consideration given to the victims of crime, that a hearing process into this act is in order. I appeal to the members of this Legislature to give consideration to having the Attorney General send it to a committee possibly to do that very thing.

I will reserve the rest of my time.

**Mr. Offer:** It is a pleasure for me to rise and join in this debate, particularly with respect to ballot item 42.

I have carefully read the resolution of the honourable member for Wellington requesting the Attorney General to review the Compensation for Victims of Crime Act in order to make certain that the legislation is adequate to meet the needs and redress the losses of victims. The resolution goes on to say what we should focus in

on, that is, basically, certain recommendations made by other committees.

I have had the opportunity of reviewing some of those recommendations and I hope that in the time allotted to me, I will be able to deal with some of those recommendations. I would like to state at the outset that I stand here in support of this resolution. I stand in support of the comments made in the resolution, but I would also like to indicate that this particular resolution, though very important and well worded and extremely crucial to not only victims of crime in this province but in general to all of the public of this province, is one which has been done by the Attorney General since this Attorney General became Attorney General.

The Attorney General and the chairman of the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board have continued to reanalyse, reassess and re-examine the aspect of whether the legislation does meet the needs of the people for whom it was designed. I would like, if I might, to refer to some of the recommendations made in keeping with the resolution of the member for Wellington (Mr. J. M. Johnson).

In its report on agencies, boards and commissions in 1983, the standing committee on procedural affairs recommended that a review of the Compensation for Victims of Crime Act be conducted and that such a review deal with all aspects of the act. In particular, the committee recommended that in all jurisdictions where maximum limits on awards are imposed, those limits should be reviewed regularly to ensure that they keep pace with the cost of living. In addition, the committee recommended that the Attorney General, in co-operation with the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board, amend the Compensation for Victims of Crime Act with the objective of raising the limits on awards.

I think it is important for us all to remember that at that time the existing limitation of awards had not changed since the act was passed. It was this Attorney General who, very early into his first appointment as Attorney General in November 1986, introduced amendments to the Compensation for Victims of Crime Act wherein the limits on monthly payments to victims of crime were substantially increased.

I think it is important to refer back to that time because on that occasion, the Attorney General remarked: "This government is committed to assisting victims of crime and I am delighted that we have been able to demonstrate this commitment in a very practical and important way. This is the first increase victims of crime have had in



15 years; it is long overdue. This legislation... will put Ontario in the forefront of North American jurisdictions which seek to compensate their citizens for the costs of violent crimes.

"Under the legislation introduced by the Attorney General, the maximum award for monthly payments to a victim of crime doubled. The maximum lump sum award for any one victim was increased. Additionally, the maximum award for all victims in respect of any one occurrence was increased.

**1120**

This does not mean to say that we are at the end of the road of analysis and examination. It is to say that this Attorney General and this government have, as time proceeds, demonstrated a continuation of such an analysis and such a reassessment. The legislation must continue, as best as possible, to address the needs of the victims of crime. The actions of this government and the Attorney General clearly, and I believe unmistakably, demonstrate that there is that commitment.

I would like, if I might, to refer to a further recommendation brought forward by the committee. That recommendation dealt with the question of public awareness in terms of what the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board is. The committee recommended in 1983 that a campaign should be launched in each jurisdiction to acquaint citizens as fully as possible with the existence of the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board and its purposes. That is an extremely important recommendation. The police should be required to provide victims of crime with information on the existence and purpose of the board. Hospitals and other institutions and agencies should be urged to support the police in doing so.

Since 1983, the board has been actively involved in such an awareness campaign. The past chairman made frequent speaking engagements. An information brochure entitled *We Care about the Victims of Crime*, which I happen to have before me, and a poster entitled *People Just Don't Bounce Back*, were introduced. More than 50,000 copies of this brochure have been distributed to police stations, hospitals, rape crisis centres, the homes for battered women and children's aid societies across the province. Wallet information cards were mailed out to police officers. Very important, and I believe the honourable member for Wellington alluded to this, board activities have increasingly been reported in the newspapers, on the radio and on television.

Under the present chairman, the board is working closely with the communications branch in developing and implementing an effective communications plan. I think it speaks quite highly of the chairman of the board that, upon learning we are dealing with this resolution, he has come to the Legislature today and is in the members' gallery listening to this resolution, listening to the concerns of members in dealing with the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board. I think it speaks highly of the commitment, determination and effort that the current chairman is going to bring to that particular position.

All police chiefs in Ontario have been canvassed. Their needs, in terms of brochures and wallet cards have been responded to. The board has asked the Ontario Police Commission to provide courses and information to police officers on the role of the board and the means by which applications may be made for compensation. Of extreme importance, in an address to the Ontario Police College, Aylmer, the current chairman has requested an inclusion of the board's role in the college curriculum.

The board is intent on developing a new format for its December 1989 annual report and is considering new methods to address the committee's findings, all with a view to informing the public of this province of the existence of such a board, what its purpose is and what it is designed to meet, as well as reassessing, reanalysing and revisiting the legislation to make certain it meets the needs of the people for which it was designed.

I think very much that the Ontario government has shown its commitment to improving and to continue to improve the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board. I have spoken of a few of the recommendations of the agencies and the committees alluded to in the resolution by the honourable member for Wellington. I am confident that this government, the current chairman of the board, the Ministry of the Attorney General and the Attorney General himself have demonstrated over the years a commitment and a determination to reanalyse, reassess and revisit this legislation in order to make certain it meets the needs of the people for whom it was designed and I am confident this will continue in the future.

**Mr. Jackson:** It gives me great pleasure to rise in support of the resolution put forward by my colleague the member for Wellington. For those at home who have just tuned in to these proceedings, I should explain that we are debating a call for a review of the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board so that the Attor-



ney General can look at ways of improving services to victims of crimes.

As the Conservative MPP responsible for women's issues, I support the call for this review, not because I disagree with the board's concept and not because I object seriously to its current method of operation; rather, I think any government agency requires regular review and monitoring so that any problems can be identified and corrected. Over the next few minutes, I would like to voice some of my concerns about criminal injuries compensation in this province and make suggestions for its review.

First, I believe the board needs the power to reverse an initial decision denying compensation.

As all members are aware, a crime victim's medical condition or financial stability can deteriorate over time. The Criminal Injuries Compensation Board must therefore retain the flexibility to increase compensation after an order is made, and what is already a power in the statute should be given more meaning and more life.

But the board also needs the power to make an order of compensation after initially denying one, if changed circumstances so warrant. This June, the all-party standing committee on the Ombudsman recommended an amendment to the Compensation for Victims of Crime Act that would give the board this badly needed flexibility. I support that recommendation and hope it will be studied carefully during the review.

The second point is that there must be greater public awareness of the board's existence and the services it provides.

In 1983, another standing committee of the Legislature recommended that the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board "strengthen the public's awareness of the board and its function of compensating victims of violent crime."

I realize that over the years the board has taken great strides in the area of public awareness and that the number of applications continues to increase, but those applying for compensation still make up but a small minority of all crime victims in Ontario. For example, one in four women will be the victim of sexual assault in her lifetime, yet in 1986-87 there were only 258 sexual assault victims applying for compensation. One in 10 women lives in an environment of domestic violence, and child abuse is an equally serious problem, yet in 1986-87 there were only 88 applications brought on behalf of child abuse victims in this province.

1130

The following story of one child abuse victim who received \$15,500 from the board appeared this week in the *Toronto Star* of November 15. I would like to quote from that article.

"She loved school—but for secret, ghastly reasons.

"For Tammy Wilkieson, a grade 3 student with a fistful of As each term, school meant a break from home. Especially on Thursdays.

"Thursday was the day her stepfather would rape her.

"Thursday after Thursday...he would knock on her bedroom door, order her to come to his temporarily vacant bed and force her to have sex with him...Tammy is her real name. She insists the *Star* use it, for reasons that are key to her recovery."

The article goes on and quotes her social worker, Jan Heinrichs, who explains the importance of the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board to Tammy's recovery. Tammy is now 25 years old. "The board, which often has been described as a well-kept secret, is one way 'incest survivors can have the satisfaction of having society acknowledge that what has happened to them is unacceptable,' says Heinrichs. '...Society is telling Tammy that sexual abuse is not acceptable and that what happened to you was a terrible thing and we want to help you.'"

Ontario is full of victims like Tammy. To them, an award is more than financial compensation. It is society's recognition that a crime took place and a statement that that crime is unacceptable. It is an important part of the emotional and psychological healing process for victims.

But for too many victims, the board is still a well-kept secret. How many Tammys remain unaware of our criminal injuries compensation system? Hopefully, the review called for by my colleague the member for Wellington will come up with new ways to publicize the board and the services it provides to victims of violent crime.

Third, there must be greater participation by criminals to pay back to victims in the compensation process.

My biggest concern about the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board is that criminals are not paying their fair share of awards to victims. The Criminal Injuries Compensation Board has a statutory right to recover awards by taking criminals to court. In theory, this allows victims to receive compensation up front, without delay, and allows the board to sue the criminals afterward to recover the damages. Unfortunately, the theory is far from practice and too many



criminals escape the financial consequences of their acts.

Understandably, moneys cannot be recovered if the criminal cannot be located or if he has neither assets nor income, but even where the offender can be located and does have a job, more often than not no attempt will be made to recover the award.

In the last year for which statistics were available, we have been able to determine that the board paid out \$4.3 million to victims in Ontario. Less than \$62,000 was recovered from criminals. In other words, 98.5 per cent of the costs of violent crime are borne by society and by law-abiding citizens, and only 1.5 per cent of those costs are borne by the criminals themselves. That is not just and that is not fair. Criminals must pay their share of victim compensation.

There is a need for a Criminal Injuries Compensation Board in Ontario and there is a need for prompt and full payments to victims, but when an award has been paid and the criminal is located, there is no excuse for the board's failure to use its legal right to recover those moneys. The federal Conservative government has made great strides with its recent Criminal Code amendments, Bill C-89, but here at the provincial level we have a similar obligation to ensure that when compensation is necessary the offender pays up.

Over the past few months, my office has been conducting a study of criminal injuries compensation in jurisdictions around the world. I hope the review being requested by my colleague the member for Wellington will consider some of the positive features of other systems.

For example, in Victoria, Australia, the compensation tribunal can order an offender to refund an award without the need to take him to court. In South Australia, the criminal injuries compensation system is partially funded by a special surtax levied on criminals. In New South Wales, a government task force recommended in 1986 that the state garnishee a portion of the wages paid to prison inmates in order to partially refund any payments made to their victims.

Ontario borrowed the concept of criminal injuries compensation from other Commonwealth nations. Now we can learn from their incorporation of offender participation into the compensation process. Common sense suggests it, fairness supports it and justice demands it.

Since 1971, Ontario has operated one of the finest victim compensation schemes in the world. I am proud of that. I am proud it was instituted by the Ontario Progressive Conserva-

tive Party. Yet any program, especially after 17 years, can benefit from review and reform.

I support this resolution fully in the hope that the Attorney General will examine some of the problems I have identified so that together we can make our criminal injuries compensation system more flexible, more accessible and more just.

**Mr. Kanter:** I would like to commend the member for Wellington for his resolution on the Compensation for Victims of Crime Act administered by the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board.

I would also like to commend him for putting his case in very personal and moving terms. I think sometimes we get entirely caught up in reports, and the member for Wellington had some personal knowledge and experience with this particular matter.

I was interested that the member noted one of the past chairmen of the board was the honourable Allan Grossman, the former member for St. Andrew-St. Patrick, the father of the honourable Larry Grossman and a public official in this province who was very involved in both the correctional and victims' side of this issue.

I would also note, and I believe my colleague noted, that the current chair of the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board, Wendy Calder, is here listening to the debate and she will bring her extensive municipal and police commission experience to this issue.

My colleague the member for Mississauga North (Mr. Offer) has responded to many of the concerns raised by the member for Wellington, but I would like to indicate some of the initiatives that the Solicitor General (Mrs. Smith) and police forces in this province have taken in this extremely important area. Indeed, the Solicitor General has identified assistance to victims of crime, particularly domestic crime, as one of her top priorities.

Just before I catalogue some of the initiatives the police have taken, I would like to make two general comments to perhaps broaden a little the resolution by my colleague the member for Wellington.

First, I would note that financial assistance is a crucial, but sometimes not the only component of assistance required by victims of crime. They may need social services, counselling, the assistance offered by self-help groups. I would say, particularly in the case of the type of sickening and gruesome crimes described by my colleague the member for Burlington South (Mr. Jackson), that nonfinancial assistance may be as important or more important than financial



assistance. I would also note that in some cases, witnesses of crimes might require some assistance.

I would note first, and my colleague the member for Mississauga North referred to this, that a training program for all police in the province on victims has been instituted. The program, known as Consider the Victim, includes videotapes and workbooks. It is offered not just to new recruits but to all police officers in the province. Within the next year or so, every police officer in the province—there are 17,000 municipal police officers and members of the Ontario Provincial Police—will have received this training. This includes, but goes beyond, information about the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board.

Second, there is a brochure by our ministry that provides information for victims and witnesses. It certainly mentions the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board and how a victim can get in touch with that board. It goes beyond that and provides information about other institutions in that area: family service organizations, welfare agencies, interval and transition houses, alcohol and drug addiction foundations, and many, many others. Of course, the written information should be supplemented by information from the police involved.

It contains a very handy location for information about the police force: investigating officer's name, badge number, occurrence number; information that will be useful to the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board or to insurance companies or to other sources as well. It complements the brochure produced by the Attorney General entitled *We Care for Victims of Crime*, which describes the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board in greater detail.

**1140**

I would like also to bring to the attention of the member for Wellington and other members of the House the victim crisis assistance and referral services offered directly by the Ministry of the Solicitor General. There are three pilot projects, in Brant county, Frontenac county and Algoma district, where victims are provided with assistance and referral to various agencies, including, of course, the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board.

In addition, there are efforts by various municipal police forces. The emergency community service offered by the Metro Toronto Police Force has two components, professional social workers or volunteers, depending on the severity of the offence and the needs of the victim. These

services are initiated by the Metro police and provided by the Salvation Army, a community agency with a long record of assistance in this area.

I also want to point out, and this is something I did a small bit of research on, that victim assistance is an integral part of police service in Metro. It is part of the general occurrence report. I am reading from the Metro Toronto Police general occurrence report. There is an extensive mention of the victim and various data that are gathered. The police officer has to check off whether a victim pamphlet was issued. The police officer has to indicate whether the victim witness assistance program was referred to.

We are trying, through our ministry, through the Ontario Provincial Police, which has a standing order dealing directly with the subject, and through municipal police forces to ensure that all victims are aware of the assistance offered by the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board; and indeed are aware of other sources of assistance as well, in some cases assistance which may be even more helpful than financial assistance. I understand that other police forces, such as the Peel Regional Police Force and Durham Regional Police Force, have instituted their own programs in this area.

There was some comment on the amount of funds required. Substantial additional money, both federal and provincial, has been put into the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board. In 1979-80, the total awards were about \$2.5 million, in 1988-89 about \$10 million. Administrative costs are borne entirely by the province. They have increased as well.

The backlog which was referred to by one of my colleagues has been reduced; it is still too long, but it has been reduced. In addition to putting more money into the program, we are exploring means of expediting awards by using documentary evidence rather than formal hearings in cases where it is appropriate. I understand that it is the need for extensive documentation that has caused part of the backlog, that the actual backlog of cases ready to proceed is only several hundred rather than the several thousand referred to by one of my colleagues.

There also have been reforms at the federal level in terms of help to make the task easier for victims of crime. Photographic evidence is now allowed. There is provision for a fine surcharge, victim impact statements and restitution. These are very new provisions, but they are certainly being administered by the province. While they were passed by the federal House of Commons,



of course, they require the co-operation and the education of police forces, both provincial and municipal, and the provincial justice system.

In fact, these measures have been proclaimed only very recently, October 1 for most of the provisions; the restitution provision will not be proclaimed until January 1989. These provisions, the provision for restitution and the provision for fine surcharges, I think, will go some way to meet some of the concerns of my colleague the member for Burlington South.

In summary, this government is deeply concerned about the rights of victims and witnesses of crime. My colleague has described the extensive efforts of the Attorney General to improve the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board's systems and procedures and in reviewing the legislation.

I have tried to describe the efforts of the Solicitor General and the police force in this province to further assist victims of crime. I have tried to emphasize that while financial compensation is important, it is not the only concern of victims of crime, and we are trying to meet these other needs as well.

The review proposed by the member for Wellington has commenced. Indeed, in some ways, it is perhaps a little broader than the review he has requested, and we will continue the review he has proposed. For that reason, I am pleased to support his resolution.

**Mr. R. F. Johnston:** I would like to add my support as well to the member for Wellington's initiative today and say that it is always timely for the House to be reminded of the needs of victims of crime. Too often our citizens get the sense that the laws of the land perhaps protect the criminal more than they do the victim; we are continually having that thrown back at us as legislators.

Unfortunately, too often as well we as legislators and governments have dealt with the issue, when raised, with public relations approaches to the problem rather than dealing with the substantive concerns people have around how we compensate victims of crime. I think that has changed somewhat over the past four or five years. In the 10 years I have been here in the Legislature, in the early period of time it was much more a PR exercise than it was a real, active compensation program with all the ancillary supports that are required to make victims feel that the system of justice is not weighted against them rather than the perpetrators of crime in the country.

There are a few comments I would like to make. The member has rightfully said that it is

presently time for a review of the act. I am glad to hear from the member for St. Andrew-St. Patrick (Mr. Kanter) that this review is ongoing, but sometimes we get confused about what the concept of a review is. If it is just a matter of somebody sitting at home one night rereading the act and looking things over, but not really thinking about a major revision in the sense of action on an act, then that is something we would not want to condone in this House.

There have been recommendations, as the member for Wellington has said, from committees of this House, back in 1983 and most recently in 1988 from the standing committee on the Ombudsman, suggesting that it is time for changes to the act, that there are limitations on the board, specifically in terms of what it can or cannot do, and that these are changes which can be easily moved on. One would not find within this chamber an ideological difference of opinion at all in terms of facilitating the powers of the board to more adequately compensate and take into account a broader range of concerns than it is able to presently under the legislation.

I hope that while a review is being undertaken by the Attorney General and while the Solicitor General and the police forces are trying to do a number of things to make things better, we might in fact be gearing ourselves to some changes in legislation and a focus for debate here that would not be just on a resolution in private members' hour but around specific government action that is being taken.

I think the people of the province are in real need of hearing from us that this is not something to which we just give lipservice, on which we place some TV ads and nominally give some minor financial compensation to individuals in the province, but rather is something important enough to have legislative change, legislative enactment and debate.

The member for St. Andrew-St. Patrick says there has been a large increase in the amount of money that is actually within the budget now, from \$2 million to \$10 million, but that is over the course of a decade, I would remind the member. If we were to look at some of the cost-of-living changes during that period, the actual increase in support is not as high as I would hope this government might think a priority. When we look at the amounts of compensation that people actually get under criminal compensation compared with the amounts that they are able to get under, say, workers' compensation or other kinds of programs that are out there, they are usually infinitesimally small.



1150

It has always been a principle of mine that if one becomes disabled in this province, there should be more equality in terms of the financial outcomes for that individual than we have presently. At the moment, we have this enormous range whereby if you are on family benefits and disabled you get a certain amount that keeps you well below the poverty line. If you happen to qualify for Canada pension, you may in fact be able to get to around the poverty line. If you had a good job before you were injured, and if you were injured at work and you can prove it and get workers' compensation, then you are likely to get a wage which will keep you above the poverty line, depending on the meat chart determinations about how extensively you are injured. But if you are injured as a result of a crime, it is highly unlikely that the money you will be given to compensate you for that will go anywhere near meeting your actual real costs as a newly disabled person in our society.

Within that context I think it is really important to talk about, as have the reports that the member for Wellington alludes to, psychological pain and suffering that victims of crime endure. Any of us who has been robbed—and in this day and age that probably comes down to a majority of people in the Legislature—know that sense of incredible violation which you feel personally when your home is broken into and things which are of importance to you to one degree or another are taken. It is not so much the loss of the piece of jewellery—in my case, I remember it was a typewriter that at one time was taken—it is more the sense that your space was violated, that somehow you are no longer secure.

For a victim of crime in the more serious cases where there is actual physical violence perpetrated on that individual, the psychological effects are enormous and incredibly long-lasting. All the studies and follow-up that have been done around the victims of crime, especially in the United States, show that the enormous, lifelong damage that can be put on people is something which our compensation system does not recognize as it should.

I would just like to say that it is time, not just for a review internally by the ministry but for initiatives and a focus for debate in terms of legislative change to be brought forward to this chamber so that we can all focus more correctly on this issue and, hopefully, make those who are victims of crime out there get an extra psychological assist from the sense that they know that their members of provincial parliament are focusing

on that issue, think it is of importance, want to provide the kinds of supports that will assist them to survive and continue to flourish in our society after a calamitous, usually unpremeditated—no sense that it was going to happen to them—kind of incident that has changed their lives for ever.

I welcome the member for Wellington's resolution. I presume that all members of this House will support it. I would just say that I hope a strict interpretation of what the word "review" means is not taken by the ministry, but rather that it sees this as in fact something that will initiate action which will come back to this Legislature for our support.

**Mr. Speaker:** There is still a minute left, if any other member wishes to participate. If not, I know the member for Wellington has reserved a little less than two minutes.

**Mr. J. M. Johnson:** I would like to start by thanking the member for Mississauga North, the member for Burlington South, the member for St. Andrew-St. Patrick and the member for Scarborough West (Mr. R. F. Johnston) for their support of the resolution.

I would like to congratulate the Attorney General for taking some positive steps, but more are needed. I would like to congratulate the new chairperson of the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board, Mrs. Wendy Calder, and wish her well in the future.

A review is needed to consider the recommendations made by the standing committee on procedural affairs, the standing committee on the Ombudsman, the Office of the Ombudsman and indeed the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board. I hope the Attorney General will take into consideration the fact that all these bodies have made recommendations that do deserve some consideration. The new federal legislation, Bill C-89, should be taken into consideration too.

The main thrust of a review has to be the board's enabling legislation, to allow the board to do the things that the different committees have made recommendations on and certainly dealing with the concern I raised about my constituent. I am hopeful that the Attorney General will direct a committee of this Legislature, possibly the standing committee on administration of justice, to review the Compensation for Victims of Crime Act.

I thank the members for their support.

**Mr. Speaker:** That completes the allotted time for discussion on the two items of private members' public business. As members know, the standing order says we should deal with these



at 12 o'clock. It is so close, I presume all members would be agreeable.

Agreed to.

1201

# COMMUNITY-BASED RESOURCE AUTHORITIES

The House divided on Mr. Pouliot's motion of resolution 50 which was negatived on the following vote:

## Ayes

Bryden, Charlton, Epp, Grier, Jackson, Johnson, J. M., Johnston, R. F., Mackenzie, Martel, Philip, E., Pouliot, Rae, B., Reville, Runciman, Villeneuve.

## Nays

Adams, Black, Bossy, Brown, Chiarelli, Cleary, Cooke, D. R., Elliot, Faubert, Fawcett, Fleet, Hart, Henderson, Kanter, LeBourdais, Lipsett, Lupusella, Matrundola, McClelland, Miller, Morin, Nicholas, Nixon, J. B., Oddie Munro, Offer, Owen, Poole, Roberts, South, Tatham.

Ayes 15; nays 30.

Motion negatived.

## COMPENSATION FOR VICTIMS OF CRIME

**Mr. Speaker:** Mr. J. M. Johnson has moved resolution 48.

Motion agreed to.

The House recessed at 12:05 p.m.

## AFTERNOON SITTING

The House resumed at 1:30 p.m.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

ONTARIO HOME RENEWAL PROGRAM  
FOR DISABLED PERSONS

**Mr. Laughren:** The Ontario home renewal program for disabled persons provides forgivable loans to home owners to renovate their homes for disabled access. The importance of such a program for increasing the accessible housing stock for disabled persons speaks for itself. Without new housing starts, renovations of existing housing stock to accommodate an ageing population and disabled persons seeking a life of independence in the community is absolutely essential.

Understandably, the demand for this program has been widespread. Essentially, the home renewal program for disabled persons grants loans of up to \$15,000 to approved home owners with gross family incomes below \$45,000 for making homes or apartments in owner-occupied homes accessible. The loan is forgivable if the renovated home is not sold for five years after the award of the loan.

As of September 30, 1988, 751 applicants have been approved for the provincial program. There is now a recognized waiting list of 525 eligible applications. This program is clearly needed and clearly underfunded. Municipalities that participate in the application programs have simply been telling those interested in the program that there is no point in applying for six more months, because the money has run out. Toronto, for example, has 171 qualified applicants waiting at this very moment. In my own constituency office, there is seldom a week goes by that I do not have someone come in seeking an application.

## EXPO 2000

**Mr. Sterling:** It is with a great deal of dismay that I recently learned that the Premier (Mr. Peterson), in a letter to the Prime Minister, has come out in support of Toronto in its bid for an Expo world fair in the year 2000. I am dismayed and disappointed because the Premier knows full well that Ottawa was also bidding to host this world exposition.

The federal government has said it will make only one bid for the turn-of-the-century world fair and that it is up to the Ontario government to

decide which city it will support. Obviously, that decision has been made.

Toronto is a very dynamic city, but it is not the only city capable of hosting events of this magnitude. Why has this government forgotten about the nation's capital nestled in eastern Ontario? When will Ottawa get an opportunity to benefit from some of the perks afforded only to Toronto?

Toronto hosted the economic summit. It is building the domed stadium, with \$30 million coming from the taxpayers all over the province, and of course, Toronto is bidding for the 1996 Olympic games. Is it necessary that the province support its bid on both the Olympics and the world's fair?

I forgot to mention that the Premier did want the space agency in the Ottawa area. Unfortunately, he let everyone else get in line ahead of him. His pitch was of little value by the time it was delivered.

To the Premier of Ontario and the government of Ontario: Ontario does not end at the borders of Metropolitan Toronto.

## PRAYERS IN LEGISLATURE

**Mr. Velshi:** I wish to comment today on a member's statement made in this Legislature on November 1 by the member for Scarborough West (Mr. R. F. Johnston) concerning the Lord's Prayer. The member stated that this prayer is perhaps dated and anachronistic and went on to speak on behalf of a minority of people within this House.

As a member of a minority religious group within this Legislature, I wish to inform members, in particular the member for Scarborough West, that I have no objection whatsoever to the opening ceremonies of this Legislature, and to suggest changing the prayer at the beginning of each session is sure to be divisive and counter-productive. I fear that the end result might be to eliminate prayers altogether, and that would be wrong.

I would like to note that I do not need the member for Scarborough West speaking on my behalf on this or any other sensitive matter. Since the final decision to act on the member's suggestion is yours, Mr. Speaker, I would like to suggest that if a review of our proceedings is being considered, let it be a change to rotational prayers rather than eliminating prayer altogether.



## AMBULANCE SERVICES

**Mr. Reville:** Ambulance officers from communities across Ontario are visiting the provincial Legislature to demand changes in the ambulance system. They are members of the Ontario Public Service Employees Union. Two days ago, a report on ambulance service found a deep malaise within the province's ambulance services. It was commissioned by OPSEU and followed public hearings in eight centres in late 1987 and early 1988.

The ambulance officers will also be seeking an end to the 15-week-old strike by OPSEU Local 207 against the ambulance service in Halton-Mississauga. They are seeking wage parity with ambulance officers employed by neighbouring Metropolitan Toronto.

Following the visits to MPPs, representatives of the ambulance group will be available immediately outside the legislative chamber at the end of today's question period.

## YOUNG OFFENDER

**Mr. Jackson:** Members of the Halton community are shocked and outraged that a 17-year-old triple murderer is being given unescorted day passes that allow him to travel through my riding of Burlington South on his way to work in Hamilton. Halton residents have good reason to be concerned. A young murderer well known to the media and politicians, who cannot be identified, has been getting day passes since June. Last week, two other inmates escaped. Today, we read in a Toronto newspaper that the inmates are practically running the Syl Apps treatment centre.

My own city of Burlington used to take pride in the fact that it was one of the safest cities in Ontario, yet there have been three killings since 1987, some associated with day passes. It is understandable that my constituents are worried and upset, and the last thing they want to hear is that a young triple murderer is walking the streets of Halton by himself, a triple murderer described by a corrections officer as "so dangerous it's unbelievable. He could kill again, without a doubt."

Residents of Halton need to be reassured that our criminal justice system works and that law-abiding citizens are safe both on the streets and inside their homes. All levels of government, therefore, have a responsibility to ensure that this is the case.

CANADIAN NATIONAL INSTITUTE  
FOR THE BLIND

**Mr. Offer:** It gives me great pleasure to rise today in order to recognize and honour the Canadian National Institute for the Blind on this 70th year of its existence. With a proud history, the CNIB has grown and matured into a first-class, front-line service agency with a client population in Ontario of over 24,000 individuals, the majority of whom are over 60 years of age. Just as important is the outstanding contribution made by the thousands of trained volunteers, whose commitment and vitality maintain the excellence of this institution.

The resources and services provided are many. Suffice it to say that there are over 10,000 volunteers providing services in a variety of ways. While these accomplishments are impressive, the challenges for the CNIB remain. The special needs for the blind and visually impaired children must be met so that they can participate in the educational process, so that employment opportunities and career development plans will be in place for younger adults and so that older adults are encouraged to remain self-reliant through the use of technology and assistance available through sight enhancement services.

The CNIB is currently addressing these challenges in a committed and determined way, a way that not only meets the needs of the blind and visually impaired but also allows those individuals to reach their full potential.

## STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY

## SERVICES EN FRANÇAIS

**L'hon. M. Grandmaitre:** Monsieur le Président, c'est un plaisir pour moi de vous adresser la parole aujourd'hui, à l'occasion du second anniversaire de la Loi sur les services en français.

C'est une réalisation dont nous pouvons tous être fiers puisque cette loi a été adoptée unanimement par les membres de la Législature, le 18 novembre 1986.

Deux ans plus tard, les ministères du gouvernement de l'Ontario, appuyés par l'Office des affaires francophones et la Commission des services en français de l'Ontario, poursuivent la mise en oeuvre de la Loi.

Les ministères ont manifesté un engagement et un enthousiasme peu communs envers l'offre de services en français. Ils sont en train de transformer les dispositions de la Loi en une réalité dynamique pour la communauté francophone de l'Ontario.



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Mais pour atteindre les objectifs que nous nous sommes fixés, nous avons besoin de l'appui constant de la communauté francophone de notre province. Elle aussi a un rôle à jouer pour assurer le succès de cette entreprise.

C'est pourquoi j'invite tous les francophones à s'engager dans la mise en oeuvre de la Loi. Pour ce faire, ils n'ont qu'à faire appel aux services qui sont déjà disponibles auprès des bureaux-chefs et des bureaux régionaux des ministères situés dans les 22 régions désignées par la Loi.

Je les encourage également à se tailler des places au sein des conseils d'administration d'agences telles que les hôpitaux ou les sociétés d'aide à l'enfance. C'est à ce niveau que se prendront les décisions sur les services en français qui touchent leur quotidien.

Les francophones sont conscients de l'importance de leur participation au succès de la Loi. Ils nous ont indiqué clairement que c'est un défi qu'ils entendent relever avec détermination.

De fait, j'aimerais profiter de cette occasion pour remercier les organismes et les individus qui nous ont accordé leur appui au cours des deux dernières années. J'adresse aussi des remerciements à tous ceux et celles qui ont pris le temps de nous écrire et de nous communiquer directement leurs commentaires. Leur soutien a été fortement apprécié par toutes les personnes engagées, de près ou de loin, dans la mise en oeuvre.

Notre attention est maintenant tournée vers l'avenir et sur le travail qu'il nous reste à accomplir au cours de la prochaine année. Oui, il y a encore bien des choses à faire, mais nous entreprenons ces tâches avec un dynamisme renouvelé.

La Loi reconnaît l'apport des francophones au développement de la société ontarienne, et c'est pourquoi nous sommes heureux de contribuer à la sauvegarde de la langue et de la culture de nos francophones.

#### SERVICES DE SANTÉ EN FRANÇAIS

#### FRENCH-LANGUAGE HEALTH SERVICES

**L'hon. Mme Caplan:** Demain, nous célébrerons le deuxième anniversaire de l'adoption de la Loi 8, Loi sur les services en français, qui proclame l'engagement de cette Assemblée à préserver la culture et l'héritage des Franco-Ontariens.

Tomorrow will mark the second anniversary of the enactment of Bill 8, the French Language Services Act, which proclaims the commitment of this Legislature to preserve the culture and language heritage of French-speaking Ontarians.

While the act guarantees the use of French in designated Ontario government institutions, there is perhaps no field where this guarantee will have a more personal or profound impact than in health care.

I am pleased to announce in the House today that my ministry is funding a new French-language community health centre for Metropolitan Toronto. Centre medico-social communautaire will provide services that will be available to 70,000 French-speaking residents of Metro Toronto.

Our ministry has found that community health centres, or CHCs, improve access to health care for target groups at the local level. We see this community health centre as the nucleus for French-language health services in Metro Toronto. My ministry will provide \$44,000 in startup operating funding and \$183,000 in capital funding. My ministry will provide approximately \$1.3 million in annual operating funding when the centre is fully operational.

Services will be provided by family doctors, nurses and specialists, starting next year. Emphasis will be placed on health education and health promotion, and allied services such as physiotherapy, occupational therapy and counselling will be phased in over several years. In addition, interpretation and accommodation services will be provided to French-speaking patients travelling to Toronto for specialized care.

As members will know, one of the challenges we face in offering health services in French is the shortage of French-speaking health professionals in Ontario.

The Ontario Ministry of Colleges and Universities has now arranged for the admission of Ontario students in health programs to Quebec universities. Up to 100 seats in medicine, dentistry, nursing, pharmacy, audiology/speech-language pathology and social work, for education in the French language, have been secured.

Our next priority is to promote this new program and make Ontario candidates aware of this opportunity. A ministry representative is visiting every French-speaking or bilingual high school in Ontario to take this message to students, parents and teachers.

French-language services are especially vital in the field of mental health, where successful treatment can depend on the quality of communication between doctor and patient. The ministry now provides funds for 25 community mental



health programs and eight addiction programs that offer services in French.

The Ministry of Health is now actively working to honour our commitment to equitable access to health care in the French language.

Le ministère de la Santé travaille activement à respecter notre engagement à assurer un accès équitable à des soins de santé en français.

#### COMPUTERS-IN-EDUCATION GRANTS PROGRAM

**Hon. Mr. Ward:** I am pleased to announce further policy changes to my ministry's computers-in-education grants program.

I believe that under previous policy we have not been receiving a great enough value for our education dollars. The changes I am announcing today will permit school boards to pursue more cost-effective purchasing strategies more closely geared to the educational needs of our students.

School boards will be able to increase their purchasing power by up to \$130 million, because they will now have the flexibility to purchase less expensive computers capable of serving specific needs in our classrooms. With this step, we will be able to move much more rapidly towards our long-range goal of providing each student with 30 minutes of instructional computer time per day.

Starting in 1989, school boards will be permitted to allocate up to 25 per cent of their computer grants to the purchase of less-expensive equipment that meets specific needs, such as business and computer studies, database analysis and word processing.

In addition, school boards will now have the flexibility to use up to five per cent of their computer grants for the purchase of specialized equipment that can better serve the needs of exceptional pupils and the unique training needs of students enrolled in technological courses. Boards will thus be able to apply a portion of their grants to assist in the purchase of special computers that will allow the blind, the deaf and the physically disabled to develop skills that will be of particular value to them in the world of work, and school boards that want to revitalize their technological studies programs will be permitted to apply a portion of their grants towards such high-tech equipment as computer-aided design and computer-aided manufacturing and robotics.

Finally, I will be providing school boards with the option of spending up to five per cent of their grants on related in-service training for teachers to help them acquire a greater understanding of

and familiarity with the use of computers. This training will also help our teachers to better integrate ministry-licensed software and commercial software into the curriculum.

The steps I took in July to open our computer program to more manufacturers, followed by the policy changes I am announcing today, represent a bold move forward. School boards will be given greater flexibility to seek out equipment that precisely meets student needs. The interest of Ontario taxpayers will be advanced by developing much more cost-effective purchasing policies. Teachers will benefit by gaining access to funds for in-service training. Perhaps most important, our children will benefit by being able to leave our schools confident in their ability to live and work in a world filled with information technology. Rather than being overwhelmed by that world, they will be able to take charge of it.

These and other computer-related initiatives I intend to introduce in the weeks and months ahead will ensure that Ontario remains a world leader in the development and application of educational technology.

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#### COURTHOUSE SECURITY

**Hon. Mr. Scott:** Later today I will introduce a bill entitled the Police and Sheriffs Statute Law Amendment Act.

The purpose of the bill is to make clear in statutory terms that municipalities, either through their municipal police forces or through a contractual arrangement with the Ontario Provincial Police where there are no municipal police forces, have responsibility for providing security in the province's courthouses.

I want to emphasize that for the vast majority of municipalities these amendments do not represent a change in the current situation, as these municipalities already provide security in the courthouses within their boundaries. Indeed, these amendments simply codify arrangements made by the previous government in March 1985 when the then Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing announced a \$3-per-household increase in the unconditional grants made for policing.

In a statement to the Legislature at that time, the then minister, Dennis Timbrell, who will be remembered by some in the House, indicated that this increase was designed to provide additional assistance in covering the cost of courthouse security as well as the supervision and transfer of prisoners appearing in court. This extra \$3-per-household grant, first paid in 1985, translated to

payments totalling \$8.7 million in the 1986-87 fiscal year.

We believe the existing police agencies in this province are in the best position to judge the level of security required in our courthouses. The province's responsibility in this area continues to be met through the inclusion of security features in new court facilities and the upgrading of such features in older courthouses.

In the past, some municipalities have benefited from special arrangements they have made with the government to cover costs of courthouse security. When this bill is passed, these arrangements will end. The government believes that all municipalities should be placed on the same footing.

We have discussed the general principle of this bill with the Courts Advisory Committee, composed of the chief justices and chief judges of the courts in the province. They concur with the government's decision that the security of the users of our courthouses is best ensured by using the trained police officers who serve all the residents of the province.

I have indicated to them that while the municipal forces and the Ontario Provincial Police will provide general security for the courthouses, the sheriff and his officers will continue their traditional role of ensuring decorum within the courtrooms.

## RESPONSES

### SERVICES EN FRANÇAIS

**Mlle Martel:** Au nom du Nouveau Parti démocratique, qu'il me soit permis de souligner le deuxième anniversaire de la Loi 8.

Il y a deux ans, l'Assemblée a adopté à l'unanimité la Loi 8. Cette loi avait pour but d'offrir des services gouvernementaux à la population franco-ontarienne dans les régions désignées. Le Gouvernement s'est donné trois ans pour mettre en oeuvre les mécanismes nécessaires pour assurer la disponibilité des services.

Malgré les efforts du président de la Commission des services en français de l'Ontario, M. Gérard Raymond, je crains que l'application de la Loi ne soit pas complétée en 1989. Il reste encore beaucoup à faire afin que toutes les parties impliquées comprennent pleinement leurs obligations.

Il sera important, dans l'avenir, de mieux informer le public sur cette loi. J'encourage donc le Gouvernement à lancer une campagne publicitaire qui expliquerait en détail les différents aspects de la Loi 8.

J'aimerais aussi souhaiter bonne chance au ministre délégué aux Affaires francophones (M. Grandmaître) en ce qui concerne la tâche qui l'attend.

### FRENCH-LANGUAGE HEALTH SERVICES

**Mr. Reville:** I would like to respond to the statement today by the Minister of Health (Mrs. Caplan), en anglais seulement. While this party obviously is pleased to receive news of another community health centre and that the government is going to provide startup operating funding and capital funding for service that will begin next year, we have to point out with regret that the minister is taking tiny steps indeed towards a health system which will have much more reliance on community health centres than it currently does. All members of the Legislature will know that over the years this party has insisted strongly that community health centres are one of the ways to reduce the pressure on hospital services, pressure that we hear about more and more often every day.

We notice with regret as well that the Ministry of Health continues to aver that community health centres can improve access to health care for target groups at the local level. Of course, our quarrel with the targeting of community health is that we believe community health centres have a far broader application than clearly does the Ministry of Health and we think that in this regard the Ministry of Health is quite wrong. Yes, target groups can benefit from community health centres, but so can all people who are desirous of preventive health services.

I note, as well, that the proposal involves accommodation services to French-speaking patients travelling to Toronto for specialized care. Does this mean the Ministry of Health is finally going to repair the inadequacies of the northern travel grants which have been pointed out to the minister over and over again, particularly by my colleagues from the north?

Clearly, equitable access to health care is important in French as well as in other languages. We do not believe we have achieved a health care system in this province that gives equitable access to people in any language.

### SERVICES EN FRANÇAIS

### FRENCH-LANGUAGE SERVICES

**M. Villeneuve:** Au nom de mon parti et en mon nom personnel, je me joins au ministre délégué aux Affaires francophones (M. Grandmaître) pour reconnaître le deuxième anniversaire de la Loi 8 sur les services en français. Je peux



aussi admirer, comme le ministre délégué aux Affaires francophones l'a mentionné hier, lors de la réception fêtant le deuxième anniversaire, le fait d'une croissance grandissante d'employés francophones parmi la fonction publique de l'Ontario.

En octobre 1987, j'ai écrit au Premier Ministre (M. Peterson) en lui demandant de créer un comité gouvernemental dans le but d'examiner les intentions du Gouvernement en ce qui a trait à la mise en vigueur de la Loi sur les services en français. Cela aurait pu éviter toute confusion et inquiétude parmi la population ontarienne. Malheureusement, le Premier Ministre a refusé la création d'un tel comité.

Par contre, je ne peux m'empêcher de faire part de quelques souvenirs lorsque mon chef parlementaire m'a mentionné que le Gouvernement voulait célébrer le deuxième anniversaire de cette loi.

Deux ans peut sembler une éternité pour certains députés libéraux, mais je dois leur rappeler que le 24 août 1988 était le 17<sup>e</sup> anniversaire de l'annonce, par le premier ministre Robarts, de l'établissement des écoles secondaires françaises en Ontario. Cette année, on célèbre aussi le 20<sup>e</sup> anniversaire des écoles primaires françaises en Ontario, annoncées par le premier ministre Bill Davis à cette époque.

En 1978, le procureur général Roy McMurtry annonçait la traduction des lois ontariennes. On célèbre cette année le dixième anniversaire de cet important événement. En mai dernier, on aurait pu célébrer le quatrième anniversaire de la disponibilité du français dans nos cours provinciales.

It has always been our party's policy to expand French-language services where numbers warrant. While we are on the subject of anniversaries of significant legislative initiatives, it might be useful to remind the new members of the Liberal Party opposite that Ontario has a long history of progressive, social, sensitive legislation. The first human rights statute in the contemporary era was the Racial Discrimination Act, 1944. This is the 44th anniversary of this initiative by the then Premier George Drew.

In 1951 we passed the Fair Employment Practices Act and the Female Employees Fair Remuneration Act. It is also the 26th anniversary, in 1988, of the Ontario Human Rights Code and the 30th anniversary of the Ontario Human Rights Commission, established by the Honourable Leslie Frost.

I could go on and on and mention many other anniversaries. However, we want to acknowl-

edge the second anniversary of Bill 8 and also remember that this is the 20th anniversary of the Progressive Conservative motion in this House to permit the use of both English and French in this Legislature.

#### COMPUTERS-IN-EDUCATION GRANTS PROGRAM

**Mr. Jackson:** I would like to respond to the rather incredible statement by the Minister of Education (Mr. Ward) regarding computers in education. Today's announcement is a reconstituted announcement of one he made last year. In fact, it masks over the outrage from boards all across Ontario when the very same Minister of Education cancelled promised funds for computers.

He is well aware of the impact. It put boards all across Ontario in the most awkward position of having to cancel orders. Some they could not cancel; they had penalties to pay. Other boards were forced to buy the equipment. Based on his promise, which he cancelled, they were forced to buy that equipment and pass that expense directly on to taxpayers.

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Instead of the minister seeking a headline today, he should be guided by the headlines he has already created for school boards across Ontario. For example: "The Timiskaming School Board Returns Seven Computers," thanks to his decision; "Cutback in Government Funding Means a Shortage of Computers for Elementary Pupils," thanks to his government; "Reduction in Grant Means Public Boards Must Pay More for New Computers," thanks to his government; "RC Trustees Decide to Find the Cash to Keep the Computers" his government promised.

There is an expression in computers that there are bits and bytes; those are the key components of computers. Today the minister has walked into this House with a two-bit announcement and all it does is take a bigger bite out of local property taxpayers in this province.

#### ORAL QUESTIONS

##### OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

**Mr. B. Rae:** I have some questions for the Minister of Labour about the very tragic situation at Libbey Owens Ford in Lindsay where there are, as the minister will recall from question period yesterday and from last week, a number of workers who have been terminated and fired by the company because of their health, and a number of other workers who are involved. We



understand that there is a woman working at the plant who has been advised by her own doctor that she is in fact now sensitized to isocyanates. She sees what happens to those individuals who, under the medical surveillance program, are so classified: they are terminated by the company.

I wonder if the minister can tell us what he thinks this woman should do. Should she report her health condition or should she simply keep it to herself?

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** The Leader of the Opposition refers, I think, in the preamble to his question, to some six workers who have already received termination notices after being on leave with pay for periods varying from four months to two and a half months. One has to be very sympathetic to the plight of those workers who, I think everyone agrees, ought not to return to an environment where their health will be put at further risk. The issue really is how we are going to ensure that those workers continue to have an income and continue to have resources to put food on the table, pay their mortgages and all of those sorts of things.

What I should tell my friend the Leader of the Opposition is that I have asked the Workers' Compensation Board to put those cases on a priority basis and have a determination of their claims, because where a worker's health has been imperilled as a result of a situation in a workplace and that worker can no longer work there, it is imperative that the worker compensation system intervene early and provide appropriate compensation.

**Mr. B. Rae:** There is no scarier word from the minister to workers than that their case has suddenly become a "priority" with the Workers' Compensation Board.

I hear two very different things from the minister. I hear him saying yesterday to my colleague the member for Hamilton East (Mr. Mackenzie) that the reason these individuals were fired was because there was no place in the entire plant, no spot in the office or anywhere which could be found in which they would be safe, in which they would not be sensitive. There is no place they can work. That is his statement yesterday.

His statement just about five seconds later was that his officials have found that the levels in the plant are okay; there is no problem with the level of isocyanates in the plant.

I find a contradiction between those two statements. The minister cannot have it both ways. He cannot have a plant in which the substances are so volatile and so widespread

throughout the plant that workers who are sensitized—and there may in fact be as many as 100 of those workers—cannot work and at the same time say the levels are safe. There is something wrong with the minister's law, something wrong with the minister's legislation—

**Mr. Speaker:** Question.

**Mr. B. Rae:**—something wrong with the way the minister is doing business in the province, if he is saying to those workers who are sick, "You can't go back anywhere in the plant," and saying to everyone else, "Don't worry; it's A-OK."

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** I do not think I said that at all. I think what I said—

**Mr. B. Rae:** You did.

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** If the Leader of the Opposition wants to stop hollering for a moment, I think I can clarify what he considers to be inconsistencies and show him that these are not inconsistencies. He knows full well that sensitization to isocyanates can take place over an extended period of time. Back in 1987, ministry officials went into Libbey Owens Ford and put into place a number of orders and control programs to ensure that Libbey Owens Ford was always under the acceptable levels of isocyanates in the workplace. Those orders are now being complied with.

What I said yesterday and what I will tell the Leader of the Opposition today, is that as a result of those control orders being put into place and as a result of further investigation being done by the health and safety support services branch of my ministry and inspectors, and medical surveillance orders being put into place, the atmosphere today is safe. But I should tell him that isocyanate sensitization can happen over a period of time. Even with those orders being complied with, a worker who has been sensitized to isocyanates ought not to return to that environment. Surely the member could understand that.

**Mr. Mackenzie:** Surely the minister understands that given a process of beginning to be sensitized to the isocyanates means that even levels lower than the levels normally associated with being safe can affect these workers.

Will the minister not understand that history has a way of repeating itself? We took a hell of a long time to come up with standards that dealt with asbestos workers, and an awful lot of people were sick and died in the meantime. We did the same thing with the miners in the gold mines of northern Ontario, and their widows suffered for many years. We may have the same thing happening now with aluminum dust in a number



of our plants in Ontario. We have the same situation with isocyanates. This is why the minister has to move in that plant and has to move now, and he does not do it by allowing a company to fire workers because it has made them sick.

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** I want to remind the member for Hamilton East that the regulation of substances of this sort, of isocyanates and other hazardous substances, is now done through the work of a joint labour-management committee. In fact, the members of that committee, working together, have determined jointly what acceptable levels or tolerable levels of isocyanates in the atmosphere ought to be. If he is suggesting to me that I ought to ask that committee to review the determination that has been made, that is a fair suggestion. We may very well have to do that.

I want to tell him and the Leader of the Opposition, though, that under Bill 162, which is currently being debated in this House, the level of compensation for the workers who must withdraw from the workplace under these circumstances would be full compensation and, second, that this bill provides that employers in these circumstances must re-employ their workers and indeed suggests and requires—

Interjections.

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** Let me finish—suggests and requires that employers under these circumstances would design modified work to get those workers back to work as quickly as possible.

**Mr. Speaker:** New question. The Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. B. Rae:** I want to keep going to the minister on this question. I am going to be coming back to the question of the ambulance drivers later on, but I am so dissatisfied with the answers I have had from the minister that I feel obliged to pursue this series of questions.

Again, what advice does the minister have for the woman whose name I cannot give him because I do not want to make that decision for her? I want the minister to tell us what his advice is. The company has taken the position and has made it very clear that as soon as it has that information with respect to sensitivity to isocyanates, it is going to terminate.

They are not worried about the Workers' Compensation Board; they are not in a relationship with it. They are simply terminating that employment relationship.

I want to ask the minister: What is he going to do to stop the company from terminating people without any assurance that they are in fact going to get coverage from the Workers' Compensation Board? The minister knows there have been claims galore on isocyanates alone that have been refused consistently by the board and in which workers are like ping-pong balls. They go back and forth between the board and the company, they are out of work and they do not get any compensation.

I want to know what the minister is going to do to guarantee workers that the company is going to keep them on and not simply terminate them for the simple reason that working at that company has made those workers sick.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you. The question has been asked twice.

**Mr. B. Rae:** What is he going to do to save those workers?

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** Obviously, I do not want to comment on the situation of a worker based on the facts presented to me by the Leader of the Opposition. I simply reiterate what I said yesterday, that first, there are a number of recourses that, obviously, will be proceeded with immediately. A grievance under the collective agreement is the first and most available.

Second, it may very well be that matter should come, on an urgent basis, before the Ontario Labour Relations Board. Third, ministry inspectors will be there and are on site to determine if any of the actions taken by the company represent a reprisal.

The fourth point I can only reiterate, and that is, what we need in this province, desperately, is a statutory provision requiring employers to ensure employment of their injured workers just as soon as those workers are healthy and ready to go back to work. That is what Bill 162 provides, and that is the bill that I hope we can get passed in this House quickly so we can resolve problems like this.

**Mr. B. Rae:** Bill 162 is a complete red herring. The minister has already said in this House that they cannot go back to that particular workplace. He has accepted the company's arguments that said sensitivity is such that they could not go back. Bill 162 has nothing whatsoever to do with it. The minister is bringing this in and it has got nothing to do with the situation.

My question for the minister is a different one. This is not a case of one dismissal, one termination in a plant, with respect to a question of insubordination or something else. The



minister knows full well that the termination grievance can take as long as a year or a year and a half before it is finally settled.

This is a question of a pattern. There is an isocyanate problem in that plant. It is not isolated to one worker; it covers several workers. I am saying to the minister: What guarantee is he prepared to give to those workers that they will not be terminated by the company until such time as there are firm guarantees with respect to their future in terms of workers' compensation and other benefits?

**Mr. Speaker:** The minister.

**Mr. B. Rae:** You cannot simply leave people out on the street with no benefits, no protection—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. The member asked the question some time ago. Minister.

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** Just on Bill 162, I think if the Leader of the Opposition wants to review the provisions, he will see in that bill references as well to requiring employers to undertake modified work plans to ensure that workers can get back to work.

The situation we have here is a medical determination that it would be inappropriate for those workers to return to that workplace. In those situations, it is urgent; I agree that compensation matters should be adjudicated just as quickly as possible so that appropriate compensation can be paid. Beyond that, the grievance procedure has to be used, and certainly in the interim short-term sickness and disability plans available to the employees in that situation would compensate the individual workers.

**Mr. B. Rae:** There are notices going up on the company's bulletin boards with respect to what has gone on. The company is accusing the trade union of being involved in an organized work stoppage. There are major disputes going on within the company right now as I speak, with accusations being made by the company with respect to concerted activity by employees. The minister himself is in possession of a letter from Mr. Nickerson, who is the secretary-treasurer of the Canadian Auto Workers, who says to the minister, "We are aware of individuals who have been told by their doctors that their breathing is getting progressively worse and the comment has been made that there is no way they are going to let the company find out because they do not want to be fired."

The minister's response is, "Use the grievance procedure," which every worker in that plant knows can take as long as a year to a year and a half in terms of ultimately getting to an end of

that process. That is how badly jammed up the labour arbitration process is in this province, and the minister should know that as Minister of Labour.

I would like to ask the minister: Get with it, get on to it. He has workers who are being fired. He has people who are afraid to tell the company they are getting sick because they know they are going to get fired. Why does the minister not tell the company to clean up its act and make sure that people are not getting fired in this province simply because they are getting sick?

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** I want to assure the Leader of the Opposition that our inspectors in the Ministry of Labour have not only issued orders but also have stopped work in that facility until orders have been complied with, and that there are ventilation systems going in to that facility as a result of Ministry of Labour orders and other steps being taken, including the requirement that workers work with respirators that are clean-air, fresh-air supplied. Those steps have been taken.

The fact is that the circumstances in that plant today, as reported to me by my inspectors, now comply with the regulations governing isocyanates. If he is suggesting to me that we need new standards in respect to isocyanates, I will take his suggestion seriously and I will bring that matter to those members of the Joint Steering Committee on Hazardous Substances in the Workplace and ask them to consider that and review their evaluations and their determinations based on the circumstances at Libbey Owens Ford. But I cannot tell him that tomorrow I can bring out a set of new standards that change the dynamic of that facility.

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** So everything is okay?

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** You know it is not.

#### PAY EQUITY IN HOSPITALS

**Mr. Brandt:** My question as well is to the Minister of Labour. It relates to a speech the minister made very recently with respect to the question of pay equity. In that speech the minister indicated that 13 months from now adjustments for nurses will start to be made; it is a historic adjustment that will make a very significant difference because it will put nurses on a different plateau. Let me state, before I ask my question, that we agree with the adjustments that will be made under pay equity and we believe those adjustments are positive and progressive, and we favour them and applaud them.



What I would like to know is if the minister did in fact make this statement, and does he agree that is a statement that is in context in the speech that he delivered?

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** I am not sure what the leader of the third party is quoting from, but he is not quoting from the speech that I gave to the Ontario Nurses' Association, I think it was two or three days ago, at the commencement of their annual meeting here in Toronto.

I think what he is quoting from is a newspaper article, and what I said to the reporter at the time, trying to explain pay equity, was that the Pay Equity Act is to eliminate gender discrimination in the pay package in situations where there are female-dominated classes and that the effect of the pay equity legislation is to redress, under the terms of the act, by the development of a pay equity plan, an appropriate regime for eliminating gender discrimination. Given the fact that hospitals come within the broader public sector provisions of the act, adjustments under those pay equity plans would have to begin 13 months from now.

**Mr. Brandt:** I appreciate the minister explaining what pay equity is all about. I know that really did not touch at the heart of the question that I raised with him and I indicated our support for the concept of pay equity.

What I really wanted to know is if the minister said the words that I repeated in this House, and if he agrees with them—and I assume that he does because he certainly did not challenge the remarks as being his own—then my question to the minister is this. In the context of his remarks he said that the nurses would now be reaching a historic plateau. That presumes they are at a certain point now in terms of the pay they will be receiving or that they are in fact receiving at this time and that they will over a period of time, some 13 months from now, be receiving an adjustment, to use the minister's words, which will result in a historic plateau.

Could the minister give this House some indication of what the cost of that historic plateau will be over a reasonable number of years, the four- to five-year period of adjustment that I believe the government agrees is going to be necessary? How much will that cost?

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** I am pretty sure of one thing. I do not think I used the term "historic plateau." I think probably I did say that the Pay Equity Act was historic legislation in that it was the first comprehensive legislation in Canada to address the inequities that exist in our legislation

and the undervaluation of work done by women in many circumstances in the province.

**1420**

What I said was, what the pay equity legislation does, in general terms—and this would apply to hospitals as it would apply to every other workplace covered by the Pay Equity Act—is require employers to begin to make adjustments to pay based on determinations of underpayment as identified by pay equity plans. That would apply to hospitals and in that sense that represents a new plateau, an identification of what the starting point should be; and the act requires, as the leader of the third party knows perfectly well, adjustments for hospitals must begin to be made some 13 months from now.

**Mr. Brandt:** In the minister's response he indicated that the employers would have to be making some kinds of adjustments in order to prepare for pay equity and the additional costs that are part and parcel of that entire package of adjustments. I agree with that. But the minister must also be aware that the Ministry of Health is going to have to make those adjustments surely by early in 1989, so that at the point of the implementation period there is going to be some certainty with respect to hospital budgets relative to the cost of this program. I will again repeat that our estimate is that the cost is \$115 million over a four- to five-year period. If that figure is incorrect, then please correct the figure.

I would like to ask the minister whether he and his cabinet colleagues have made a determination as to when they are going to advise hospitals as to what level of increase in transfer grants will be provided to individual hospitals to cover the pay equity program and when that will take place.

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** I think it would be inappropriate in the extreme for this minister or anyone else to make public suggestions as to a figure. My friend, the leader of the third party, suggests a figure. The member knows perfectly well that at this very moment the Ontario Hospital Association and the Ontario Nurses' Association are in the midst of discussions to work out details as to the development of pay equity plans.

The determination of the workplace parties talking together about how they will proceed with job classification and job identification and evaluation within their particular institutions or perhaps, if they choose, on a province-wide basis, is something that those parties are going to work out. They will identify the inequities and they will make the determinations and then the procedure will unfold. But for him to suggest, or



for this minister to suggest, that my research team or his research team or whoever's research team, has made this estimation—I think that it would be just inappropriate.

#### AMBULANCE SERVICES

**Mr. Harris:** The Minister of Health will be aware, I am sure, of the Shapiro report that was released. It indicated that there were varying standards of ambulance service across this province—in training, staffing, wages and unequal access to service. I was disappointed in the minister's response to the study when she indicated, "We will study the report and then we will have another whole study of our own again,"—which seems to be this government's response to everything that comes along.

I wonder if the minister could tell me what she disagrees with in the Shapiro report that is necessitating a whole other major study by her ministry, and I wonder if she could explain the statement attributed to her in the Toronto Sun today that says, "Ontario residents cannot expect ambulance services to be the same across the province." Is that really what the minister said, and if it is, why can ambulance services not be the same across this province?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** I think that it is important as we discuss ambulance services in this province—and I would like to acknowledge today in the gallery emergency medical attendants and acknowledge the role that they play in delivering services in the province; that in fact we have one of the finest ambulance services in North America. They come from other provinces to see how we do what we do, given our geographic differences, our urban and rural differences. In fact, I appreciate the work that has been done by Mr. Shapiro and look forward to having an opportunity to review it.

**Mrs. Marland:** I wish that I could stand in this House this afternoon and say I was pleased to see the ambulance drivers here. I would rather see them driving the ambulances, quite frankly.

It is now three and a half months since the Halton-Mississauga ambulances went on strike. That service is now below an acceptable level for the people in the city of Mississauga and the region of Peel. We have two ambulances for 600,000 people.

I would like to ask the minister how she can sit there as Minister of Health and accept that this is an acceptable level when people are being put at risk with the kind of response times that we now have documented in this strike situation.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** It is important when we discuss this issue that we recognize that negotiations on wages and benefits occur between the employers and the employees. The ministry, as members have heard on previous occasions, monitors the situation to ensure that in fact no one is at risk. The information I have is that emergency services are being maintained.

**Mr. Jackson:** The minister represents a government that can intervene when students' education is at risk, but it seems to be reluctant to participate when people's lives are at stake. That is a double standard.

This strike is in its 100th day. People in Halton in my riding believe this to be an absolutely unacceptable level of risk. The stories have been coming through the telephones, story after story, of high risk. The fire department in Burlington is making contingency plans to extend emergency medical training to firefighters.

Is the minister not even looking at some form of plan? Has she not got something on the boards that she is examining which at least will have to deal with the potential for a dual, parallel strike which will accelerate the risk levels in these two communities of Halton and Mississauga not to unacceptable but to life-threatening? When is she going to get a plan? When is she going to provide some stability for health care planning in our regions?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** As the member knows, we recently appointed an emergency services co-ordinator within the ministry so that, in fact, we could review our emergency services planning both on a provincial basis and on a regional basis.

We have made a lot of progress in the past two years. We have added some \$12 million to emergency services in 101 communities across this province. One of the reasons our service is as good as it is is that we are always trying to improve it and make it better.

I want to assure the member that we monitor to make sure that no one is at risk and that emergency services are being maintained. The information I have is that this is so.

**Mr. B. Rae:** The ambulance service in question normally has 10 ambulances. It now has five.

We have information showing that response times can be as long as 20 minutes, and in some exceptional cases will be even longer than that.

Dr. Shapiro, in his report on the public inquiry into ambulance and emergency services, says that anything longer than five minutes is not



acceptable and in fact can be described as a risk to health and indeed to life.

Did the minister consider an incident on August 20, 1988, at nine o'clock in the evening when an 80-year-old male with vital signs absent waited approximately 20 minutes for an ambulance, when the police were on the scene within five minutes; or one on October 22, 1988, at four o'clock in the afternoon at the corner of Airport Road and Derry Road with a male patient with vital signs absent? The Peel Regional police had to do cardio-pulmonary resuscitation. The ambulance took at least 20 minutes to arrive and it came from Bolton.

We have a hodgepodge system that is clearly breaking down. We have a ministry that is responsible for the level of wages and it turns around and says, "This is a private arrangement between the private employer and the ambulance drivers," where, surely, this is a service that is for health. It is not for profit; it is for people. When is the minister going to step in and create a province-wide ambulance service worthy of the name, worthy in fact of the service that the people who are in the gallery today want to provide?

1430

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** Let me assure the leader of the official opposition that if at any time he has individual cases about which he has concern, he knows that I would be equally concerned and I would be pleased to investigate those.

I want to tell the member that I met with Mr. Shapiro, that we discussed some of his recommendations and that I assured him the ministry appreciated the work he had done, that I was aware of the work he did as a former chairman of the Toronto board of health—and I knew him in those days as well—that we would treat his report seriously and that we would review his recommendations.

**Mr. B. Rae:** Mr. Shapiro has overwhelming evidence that the system is fractured, that it does not work properly, that some drivers are significantly underpaid, that there are no province-wide standards with respect to training; that people who work harder, train more or take advanced courses do not get any difference in their pay; that there are enormous problems of burnout and low morale; and that, in fact, it is a service that is not working effectively across the province.

We have people who have been out on strike for 100 days because they are working for a private-profit operator who is not prepared to negotiate some questions that need to be negotiated and dealt with. The minister pretends she

has nothing to do with it, that it is some other movie she is not involved with. She is the Minister of Health; she is responsible for the delivery of health care services in the province—

**Mr. Reville:** She pays the bills.

**Mr. B. Rae:** —and she pays the bills. She is the silent partner at the negotiating table. When will the minister realize that there needs to be a co-ordinated, comprehensive plan for ambulance services in this province which recognizes that it is a public service, that it should not be operated for profit, should not be operated here one way, there another way, taken away here, added on there, in a hodgepodge, unplanned way and that it should be seen as a service which all—

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you. I think there was a question somewhere there.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** Not only is our service recognized across Canada—and, in fact, early in December people are coming from Alberta, whose legislative committee said Alberta should model its system after Ontario's—but it is also recognized internationally. They come from Pennsylvania, from New Zealand and from Brazil.

Let me tell the Leader of the Opposition not only some of the features that make our system special but also the kind of co-ordinated approach that those from other jurisdictions are looking at. We have an integrated communications capability, we have defined qualifications for personnel and we have legislated standards. As well, we have integrated land and air ambulance elements.

We are constantly monitoring and reviewing to make it better. We seek advice from a number of places: from the district health councils, from consultants, from all those who have an interest, including the operators and the emergency medical attendants. We listen and then we make appropriate changes based on resource allocation, on a provincial as well as a regional basis.

**Mr. Speaker:** New question, the member for London North (Mrs. Cunningham).

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** The member for Burlington South (Mr. Jackson), please allow your colleague to ask a question—and the Treasurer (Mr. R. F. Nixon) and the member for Hamilton East (Mr. Mackenzie).

#### EXTENDED CARE

**Mrs. Cunningham:** My question is for the Minister without Portfolio responsible for senior citizens' affairs. The most frightening thing

facing our seniors today is certainly not trumped-up scare tactics about free trade. No, the biggest thing facing our seniors is this government's complete inaction to live up to its commitments to our elderly citizens. Many seniors are wondering what happened to the integrated homemaker program, hearing-aid funding and, perhaps of most importance, the extended care legislation.

When is the minister going to announce details of the rationalization legislation for extended care that brings about fairness and equity for all residents in nursing homes and homes for the aged?

**Hon. Mrs. Wilson:** This government, in our white paper *A New Agenda: Health and Social Service Strategies for Ontario's Seniors*, committed itself to rationalizing the extended care program. We currently have, through historical means, three different acts under two different ministries. My intention is to develop one new, improved piece of legislation that will move towards rationalizing extended care for all extended care providers in the province.

**Mrs. Cunningham:** I have letters here from the honourable minister saying that she is unable to comment on the issue because of legal action. I have another letter from the Minister of Health (Mrs. Caplan) responding to a citizen, dated October 20, saying that she is unable to comment because of legal action. I also have a letter dated October 19 from the Premier (Mr. Peterson), who states, "The government of Ontario is undertaking a major revision and rationalization of the extended care program, which will result in the development of new extended care legislation for all providers." The minister has confirmed the Premier's statement. I am assuming that we are working together in that government. The question is, when will the legislation be introduced?

**Hon. Mrs. Wilson:** As the member is aware, the Ontario Nursing Home Association launched a legal suit with regard to funding of nursing homes within the province. That issue is now before the courts, and for that reason it would be inappropriate of me to comment on the timing. The suit is before the courts at this time.

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** I wonder if I could remind the member for London North (Mrs. Cunningham), as well as other members, that we have a standing order 24(b).

**An hon. member:** We know about that.

**Mr. Speaker:** I believe you have all heard of that before. I wish you would remember it.

## ONTARIO ECONOMY

**Mr. Owen:** I have a question for the Treasurer. Statistics show that 33 cents of every dollar earned in this country and one out of every three jobs are drawn from our exports, and 80 per cent of those exports go to the United States. At the present time, we are witnessing a weakening United States economy. It is a belief that US economic growth will continue to deteriorate.

Will the minister share with us his reaction to the US slowdown and what, if anything, the province of Ontario can do to cushion the detrimental effects that will take place on this economy?

**Hon. R. F. Nixon:** I thank the honourable member for giving me notice of this important question. I also want to tell him that he is entirely correct when he brings to the attention of the House that the economy of Canada tends to follow what happens in the United States with some time delay. When things deteriorate in the United States, it is important for us.

Our assessment of what might be called a deterioration in the United States, however, is not that. It is that the rate of growth is reducing somewhat, to about 2.2 per cent to 2.5 per cent, which is seen by economists internationally as a much more sustainable rate than has been experienced. Our own projection, which I hope to table in the House in the next two or three weeks, would indicate that our own rate of growth will come down next year to something about three per cent, which is less than it was this year but still substantial growth, and we consider it to be sustainable.

Since the honourable member gave me notice I had a chance to look at some of the statistics. There have been some surges, particularly in retail purchases in the United States, which grew by about 0.7 per cent last month, indicating consumer ability to be quite strong in purchasing growth. We are not at this point seriously concerned about any sort of recession, but in fact real growth in the United States will continue and we trust and hope it will be reflected in Ontario and Canada.

**Mr. Owen:** The figures are now out for the third quarter, and they show that the economic growth in the United States has actually slowed down to 2.2 per cent. This would appear to be their slowest rate of growth in over two years. My question to the minister, my concern—

**Mr. Brandt:** Don't worry about it. You don't want to trade with them, anyway.



1440

**Mr. Owen:** That is right. My concern is that the signals are shifting, as the minister said, to maybe something more moderate, but there are some economists who are saying that it is worse than being moderate and that the situation could worsen substantially. I would like to have the Treasurer's reaction to that.

**Hon. R. F. Nixon:** I agree with the more optimistic economists that a 2.2 per cent rate of growth is sustainable growth. After a tremendous expansion over the last few years, it is my view, frankly, that whatever the people of Canada decide on Monday and whatever the next government of Canada decides, whether there is a free trade agreement or not, there will be expanding trade because we have resources and abilities here.

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**Hon. R. F. Nixon:** That is right. There is no doubt that the concerns that have been expressed by thoughtful Canadians have to do with many aspects of the free trade deal. They have to do with the removal of the control of our energy resources, the control of our trade involving our agricultural sector, and the list is well known to every reasonable observer. They would agree that the free trade agreement, as put forward, is a deal which is unsupportable.

The honourable member has indicated clearly that those measures which control the strength of our economy are those which are in fact controlled by the government of Canada, having to do with the money supply, interest rates and the rate of inflation. These are the matters which must concern us when we consider the rates of growth here.

#### WORKERS' COMPENSATION

**Miss Martel:** I have a question for the Minister of Labour concerning Bill 162 and the dual award system. In particular, I want to deal with the future-loss-of-earnings benefit.

The minister will know there has been a great deal of concern expressed by members on both sides of the House about this benefit in light of what is already happening at the Workers' Compensation Board around pension supplements, and that is that the board is deeming workers capable of doing jobs they do not have or have never done before. The board is then basing payments on those jobs instead of on the actual employment situation of those workers. As a consequence, workers across the province are

being cut off supplements or are being denied supplements.

I would like to ask the minister how he is going to prevent the same type of thing from happening with this benefit under Bill 162.

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** I think that is a very good question from the member for Sudbury East and I think that discussion of the very issue she has raised may well be the basis of a number of submissions when the bill goes to committee.

I want to tell her, though, in anticipation of that, that the way in which Bill 162 is designed—and I hope and fully expect that further design work may be done as committee members analyse the specific words—is to ensure that there is a better set of rules for making those sorts of determinations.

For example, in the bill we have used the phrase "suitable and available work." Right now, the basis for paying temporary supplements really is a matter of policy and guidelines, and there are no clear statutory guidelines, so I think the approach we are taking in Bill 162 will be a clearer and more direct direction to the Workers' Compensation Board to provide both parts of the award in the dual award system on a basis far fairer and far more just than supplements that are being paid today.

**Miss Martel:** I want to go back to the case in Saskatchewan, because that province does have the dual system in place now. The minister will know that when I spoke on this on second reading, I pointed out what a legislative review committee in that province said about the dual system. It was this: The present practice of deeming occurs continually, and the board interpreted and applied the legislation in a way which undermined the spirit of the legislators of that province. In particular, workers were being cut off because they were being deemed capable of work they were not qualified to do. They could not obtain the employment in any place and they also could not get a rate of pay that the board deemed them capable of obtaining.

I would like to ask the minister, given that this is the case in Saskatchewan, where they have the dual system, how can he continue to propose that same type of system here?

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** Simply because when we were designing the dual award system for Ontario we were quite concerned about this business of deeming and the business of the so-called phantom jobs, and we looked at the problems that Saskatchewan was having with its system. In fact, I personally phoned the minister in Saskatchewan and asked him what problems

he was having, and he identified the very problems that the member for Sudbury East is talking about. Then we designed our legislation to avoid those problems, to put statutory criteria in and to provide for regulation-making power so that the rules and regulations governing how the second part, the income maintenance part of the dual award system, will work. We ensured that we guarantee that the worker has an opportunity to have that reviewed at every stage under specific, clear guidelines that are written out in statute and set in regulation, and with the additional right of appeal should a worker feel that those rules and regulations have not been appropriately applied to his or her case.

#### TRADE WITH UNITED STATES

**Mr. Harris:** I have a question for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology. Putting aside for the moment the Canada-US free trade agreement—I do not mind returning to that—before I ask the minister to comment on the merits of that particular package that is before us now and to allow that dialogue to proceed in the proper context, I would first like to ask the minister, could he tell us, yes or no, if he supports the concept of free trade with the US?

**Hon. Mr. Kwinter:** I would be delighted to. My government, myself and my Premier (Mr. Peterson) have said from day one that we have no quarrel with the concept of free trade. We are opposed to the deal. We think it is a bad deal, and we think we gave away far too much for what we got. The only problem that we have—and I think everyone should realize this—is that we are not discussing free trade. It is a misnomer. There is nothing “free trade” about this agreement. It is a bilateral trade agreement that has no relationship whatsoever to the concept of free trade.

**Mr. Harris:** All I asked the minister was, did he support the concept? I did not ask for a lecture on the metaphysics of trade. I do not know how illuminating members found that.

**Hon. Mr. Conway:** This would not be a setup?

**Mr. Harris:** No, it is not, and I would like to—

**Mrs. Cunningham:** You should know about that, Sean.

**Hon. Mr. Conway:** That is why I asked.

**Hon. Mr. Scott:** Let us have the supplementary and get on with it.

**Mr. Harris:** I thought I was being very sincere and very upfront.

Let me ask the minister, in his role as spear carrier for Canada's prince of protectionism,

who is currently exercising his veto over the free trade deal in the Far East, can he tell us how the rejection of the Canada-US free trade agreement will encourage trade liberalization at the multinational level, how it will advance negotiations at the current General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade round and whether or not, when the minister attends the GATT mid-term review in Montreal, he is going to go there with a bag over his head?

**Hon. Mr. Kwinter:** I think it is important that all members know that these two issues are not mutually exclusive. We have been supporters of the GATT process. We are going to be participating in Montreal on December 5. We have been actively pursuing our trade relationships with the Pacific Rim, with our traditional partners in Europe and with the United States.

I should remind members that we have the largest trading relationship in the history of the world, and what is more important—and I think the member should understand—as far as trading, when you take a look at the United States, we buy more from them than the United Kingdom, Japan, West Germany, France and Italy combined. So we have a very important role to play in that particular relationship, and all we want is something where we have equity. The deal itself is not equitable. We have given away far too much for what we have got. We think that we could have achieved as much through GATT, and if we had had a good deal we would have supported it.

#### PLASTIC PACKAGING

**Ms. Collins:** My question is for the Minister of the Environment. As the minister is aware, plastic packaging is causing increasingly serious environmental problems in our society. Last June this assembly unanimously endorsed my resolution calling upon the minister to establish a plastics waste management program. Would the minister please outline the steps his ministry has taken to date or plans to take in the near future to implement this motion.

1450

**Mrs. Cunningham:** In 30 seconds.

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** I will certainly try to do that as expeditiously as possible.

It is a very good question. It was, as the member has pointed out, the subject of her resolution in this House. I can tell her, for instance, that the PET, or polyethylene terephthalate bottle, which is a plastic bottle on the market, in fact is currently being collected in most of the municipalities as part of the blue box



program. We want that to be in all municipalities.

To move beyond the blue box program, which I think everybody would agree is important, I have had initiated, with representatives of the plastics industry of Canada, the Grocery Products Manufacturers of Canada and the Packaging Association of Canada, a number of discussions between our ministry officials and those people, because we would like it to be similar to the soft drink industry which in fact provided a lot of money, \$20 million, and some resources to make recycling work.

We are developing joint 4R, or reduction, reuse, recycling and recovery strategies for consumer and for commercial and industrial packaging. The ministry, along with the Society of Plastics Industries of Canada and Trans-Ontario Plastics, is jointly funding a special project in the Ottawa area at a cost of \$165,000. This project will provide information for future plastics programs.

The Recycling Advisory Committee and Ontario Multi-Material Recycling Inc. have commissioned a waste management strategy that will include a packaging strategy. It will be submitted to the minister, I understand, by December of this year.

**Ms. Collins:** Although my resolution affirmed a clear preference for 4R in the development of a plastics waste management policy, it also recognized that safe and environmentally sound degradation may be a desirable method of waste disposal in certain instances, and called upon the minister to take a number of actions to investigate further the degradability option. Would the minister please outline his ministry's plans in this regard.

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** Very briefly, I agree that, first of all, we must put recycling of plastics as a first priority. There are few people out there who are concerned about waste management who would not recognize that. Many of the environmental and industry groups in the province believe that degradable plastics make the recycling of plastics difficult, if not impossible. Therefore, I am indicating that I believe the jury is still out on whether biodegradable or degradable products, for instance, are the way to go.

The ministry will jointly investigate the science of these biodegradable plastics. This study will take into account the photodegradability and the biodegradability parameters, the effects of the byproducts and the degradable products.

In other words, essentially what we are doing, to put it in a nutshell, is investigating very carefully all aspects of degradability to ensure that in the method we follow, and I prefer recycling, recycling is not detrimentally affected by this and that the degradability of products does not cause contaminant problems.

## WATER QUALITY

**Mrs. Grier:** My question is also to the Minister of the Environment. The standing committee on general government has now had two meetings to discuss the estimates of the Ministry of the Environment. We meet again today, by which time most of the allotted time will have passed and we will have listened to the minister for at least two hours; it seems like more.

For the last two weeks, my staff have been attempting to obtain the latest report on the discharges by industries into the province's waterways, because this would have been most useful in preparing for the minister's estimates. The 1987 industrial discharge report was sent to my office half an hour ago.

Can the minister tell the House whether the release of this very important document, which is the most important document in reviewing the ministry's performance with respect to waterways, late on a Thursday afternoon and late in the discussion of his estimates was by accident or by design?

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** I used to be suspicious when I was in opposition as well, I can recall. In fact, it was released today, not late this afternoon. I think, first of all, that we will have time this afternoon in the estimates of the Ministry of the Environment, and of course we will have time next week.

If my calculation is correct, next Thursday—it will not be Monday or Tuesday, that kind of thing, where we would be right back into it—we will have the opportunity to discuss this at some length, in both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the general government committee.

I think there will be a full and good discussion. I have enjoyed, so far, the presentations that have been made by the opposition critics. I have really enjoyed the opportunity to be able to respond to their very good questions that have been directed to me. I will certainly continue to do so as we proceed through the estimates to determine whether the policies are those with which the member would agree or not.

**Mrs. Grier:** I think the time allotted to a ministry's estimates should bear some relationship to the loquacity of the minister.

In a preliminary review of the report we have just received, one notices there are 300 industries that discharge to the province's waterways. In 1985, when this minister took office, 147 of them were being monitored. In 1986, the performance had improved and 154 were being monitored. We find now that there are 157 being monitored. Can the minister explain why 143 industries that discharge directly to waterways across Ontario are not even categorized or monitored by his ministry in the report we have now received?

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** The member would know that since this reporting system has been established, the number of items looked at has been considerably enhanced. For instance, in terms of sewage treatment plants, the number we now look at, which is beyond the requirements of the International Joint Commission, is rather substantial. She would know that some improvement has taken place in this particular year. I do not think it is sufficient improvement to please me, but there has been that improvement.

She would know that there are cleanup programs in place for those industries that have experienced the most exceedences in 1987, and that we have responded positively for the sewage treatment plants by enhancing the funding, more than doubling the funding from 15 per cent to almost 33 per cent for sewage treatment plants in the enhancement of that.

She would know that as a result of that additional funding, \$87 million in additional funding has been provided. She also knows that the municipal-industrial strategy for abatement program will find far more contaminants to look at, not just lumps and colours; a wide range of contaminants will be monitored under the MISA program. This, of course, is going to give an even more detailed picture and a better way to look—

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you. New question, the member for Burlington South.

#### REPORT OF LEGIONNAIRE'S DISEASE

**Mr. Jackson:** I have a question for the Minister of Health. It has recently come to our attention that there has been an outbreak of Legionnaire's disease discovered at Hamilton Psychiatric Hospital. Could she please confirm that report.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** It is my understanding that in fact the public health units and the Ministry of Health are investigating right now the reported outbreak at Hamilton Psychiatric.

**Mr. Jackson:** The minister would also be aware there is a fourfold increase in the number

of reported incidents for residents of that institution. There are 180 residents. There has been a fourfold increase in the number of those showing symptoms. She would also be aware that the incubation period of this disease, which is transmitted through the air, is between two and 10 days.

Given that the source of this disease is generally found in the heating and cooling systems of larger institutions like this, has she not only directed her health care people to go in, but also people to examine the air quality and the heating and cooling systems, to help better understand the source of the disease so we can be assured that people in health care facilities in Ontario are not at greater risk because of this disease?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** I am always concerned when I am made aware of reports of any kind of outbreak of any disease in any institution that might have an impact on public health.

I want to assure the member that Dr. Lorna Browne, associate medical officer of health at the Hamilton-Wentworth Regional Health Unit, visited the hospital on November 15 and determined that the situation is under control. In fact, environmental sampling has been undertaken with the assistance of public health labs. I want to assure the member that public health officials from the Hamilton-Wentworth are available with whatever assistance is required from the ministry and the situation is under control.

1500

#### LANGUAGE TRAINING

**Mr. Faubert:** My question is to the Minister of Education. Multicultural communities in the city of Scarborough and throughout the province have received the government's recent heritage language announcement with much enthusiasm. However, some groups and individuals have expressed to me concern that equal attention must remain focused on English-as-a-second-language training. Can the minister advise this House of initiatives this government has taken to assist ESL training.

**Hon. Mr. Ward:** There is no question that this province has been enriched by a very rapid influx of new Canadians, as many immigrants to this country choose to locate in Ontario, no doubt to take part in the significant prosperity Ontario is currently enjoying as a result of this government's policies. I think it is also fair to say that this government fully recognizes the need to support that community to help it make the



transition and to thrive and prosper in our society.

Over the course of the past three years, for instance, we have increased English-as-a-second-language funding to school boards for day programs by something like 93 per cent. In the past three years, we have increased funding for English-as-a-second-language continuing education programs by somewhere in the neighbourhood of 200 per cent.

I think that clearly demonstrates that indeed we are committed to providing the very necessary services new Canadians will need, and I would encourage our federal counterparts to show the same level of commitment because, frankly, I think they too have a role to play in sharing our commitment to deliver those services to new Canadians.

## PETITIONS

### POLYCHLORINATED BIPHENYLS

**Mr. Mackenzie:** I have a petition to the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario which reads as follows:

"No PCBs at Woodward Avenue sewage treatment plant. As a community, we are entitled to a say as to our backyards becoming a storage site for PCBs for the region. We do not want this community to turn into another Love Canal: cancer, birth defects. Stop it now before it is too late."

It is signed by considerably more than 650 residents of the north end of my riding. I have signed it.

### TEACHERS' SUPERANNUATION FUND

**Mr. Owen:** I have a petition signed by 41 people.

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"To amend the Teachers' Superannuation Act, 1983, in order that all teachers who retired prior to May 31, 1982, have their pensions recalculated on the best five years rather than at the present seven or 10 years.

"The proposed amendment would make the five-year criteria applicable to all retired teachers and would eliminate the present inequitable treatment."

I have signed it as submitted.

## RETAIL STORE HOURS

**Mr. Sterling:** "To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"On the issue of Sunday shopping, let's not leave this issue up to the municipalities. This is the responsibility of the provincial government. I say no to Sunday opening."

This petition has been signed by 47 people from the Ottawa-Carleton area and signed by myself.

I have another petition:

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"We are opposed to open Sunday shopping and want to retain a common pause day in Ontario."

This was also signed by many people from the Ottawa-Carleton area—125 including people from Nepean, Gloucester and the city of Ottawa. This is also signed by myself.

## REPORT

### STANDING COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Laughren from the standing committee on resources development presented the committee's report and moved its adoption.

Your committee begs to report the following bill as amended:

Bill 88, An Act to regulate Truck Transportation.

Motion agreed to.

Bill ordered for third reading.

## MOTIONS

### COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Hon. Mr. Conway moved that Mr. Kormos be appointed as a member of the standing committee on regulations and private bills.

Motion agreed to.

### PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

Hon. Mr. Conway moved that notwithstanding standing order 71(h), the requirement for notice be waived with respect to resolution 45.

Motion agreed to.

## HOUSE SITTING

Hon. Mr. Conway moved that when the House adjourns today, it stand adjourned until 1:30 p.m. on Tuesday, November 22, 1988.

Motion agreed to.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

POLICE AND SHERIFFS STATUTE LAW  
AMENDMENT ACT

Hon. Mr. Scott moved first reading of Bill 187, An Act to amend Certain Acts as they relate to Police and Sheriffs.

Motion agreed to.

**Hon. Mr. Scott:** This is the bill I referred to in statements this afternoon.

## JURIES AMENDMENT ACT

Hon. Mr. Scott moved first reading of Bill 188, An Act to amend the Juries Act.

Motion agreed to.

**Hon. Mr. Scott:** When the Legislature passed the Equality Rights Statute Law Amendment Act of 1986, it extended the exemptions that are available from jury duty to the spouses of the persons exempted. As a result of an oversight, we did not permit the exemption to extend to common law spouses of the spouses in question, and this major reform is effected by this bill before the House.

PROVINCIAL OFFENCES AND HIGHWAY  
TRAFFIC AMENDMENT ACT

Hon. Mr. Scott moved first reading of Bill 189, An Act to amend the Provincial Offences Act and the Highway Traffic Act.

Motion agreed to.

**Hon. Mr. Scott:** As the House will perhaps know, under the Young Offenders Act, there are provisions for the suppression of information as to the names of young offenders being prosecuted under the act. The federal government has made exemptions from that suppression and the purpose of this legislation is simply to bring our provincial quasi-criminal legislation—the Highway Traffic Act and the Provincial Offences Act—into line with the Young Offenders Act in terms of the exemptions from suppression of information as to identity.

1510

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

House in committee of supply.

ESTIMATES, MINISTRY OF HEALTH  
(continued)

**Mr. Chairman:** Mr. Eves adjourned the debate, but of course he may come back at any time he wishes to do so. Shall we proceed?

**Mr. Sterling:** On behalf of Mr. Jackson, we would relinquish the floor at this time.

**Mr. Chairman:** Fair enough.

**Mr. Reville:** Perhaps I could let members of the Legislature know what is about to happen this afternoon. We are now into almost the third hour of Health estimates. On Monday last, the Minister of Health (Mrs. Caplan) made her opening statement, followed by the critic for the Progressive Conservative Party, the member for Parry Sound (Mr. Eves), who made his opening statement. This afternoon I shall make my opening statement.

At the conclusion of my opening statement, I expect the estimates for this day will be concluded and we will go to questions on votes on the next occasion when we deal with the Ministry of Health estimates, which I understand, following our meeting this morning, will be Tuesday afternoon, November 22.

For those of you who have never heard me give a two-hour-and-45-minute speech, this will indeed be an occasion not to miss—

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** They thought I was long-winded.

**Mr. Reville:** Thank you, Madam Minister—particularly as part of the reason for this unusual arrangement was that I had made an arrangement with the government and the third party that they would carry the estimates on day one and I would carry them on day two. This allowed me to go forth and lose my voice.

I was happy to be the master of ceremonies at a municipal election campaign on Monday evening, and all six candidates in that joint campaign were victorious. I was required to spend the entire evening screaming with exaltation, and it appears that my voice has not yet returned to its normal volume.

If members think I am being uncharacteristically diffident, it is not that I am being diffident, it is that I do not have the projection that they might have come to expect from me, and those of you who are prone to heckling may do so with impunity today, because issuing sharp retorts is beyond my current capability. However, you never know, Mr. Chairman, I may recover that ability at any time during this speech, so I want you to beware.



I have just been handed a selection of excellent notes which I will reveal to you shortly. I do have a number of introductory remarks I want to make, and I should warn members that I intend to go quite minutely through the estimates briefing report, which some members will have before them.

I should point out that the notebook of the Minister of Health is considerably thicker than mine, which makes me wonder whether she has additional pages in her book that the critic for the third party and I did not receive. If that is the case, perhaps she might like to make those additional pages available. I have this sort of thin little book. It has a red cover and it has 106 pages and the pages are filled with numbers.

The Ministry of Health estimates background material is organized. It is divided into a total of six votes, each of which relates to the expenditures of each of six divisions, the first of which is administration; the second, institutional health; the third, emergency and special health services; the fourth, mental health; the fifth, community health, and the sixth, health insurance.

The briefing materials include some additional information of interest to people who find these things interesting. For instance, there is a schedule of the establishment of the Ministry of Health and a comparison of the size of that establishment with that of the previous year. We could note, if we look on page 88 of this briefing book, that the staff complement of the Ministry of Health—still called, oddly, “manpower”—is increased by very few numbers of permanent staff, which would lead one to believe there is a lot of contracting out going on.

There are almost 10,600 employees who work for the Ministry of Health, and the bulk of those employees, almost 6,500, work in psychiatric services. That, of course, represents the staff of the 10 provincial psychiatric hospitals dotted around the province. The next highest group of staff is those people who, I assume, work mainly in Kingston, Ontario, and have the delight of processing the health insurance claims and payments to those who are able to reach into the Ontario health insurance plan pot of gold and withdraw tax dollars for the provision of various kinds of health services. There are just a few more than 1,600 employees there.

I believe this is the place at which the famous gentleman with the quill pen works and adds up the amount of money that will be billed to the federal government for its share of our health care system. He has an eyeshade, I understand, the kind of arm suspenders we are familiar with

from some shopkeepers in the west and a quill pen. He works somewhere in Kingston.

**1520**

Now that I have explained how this book works, for all those who are just listening and hanging on my every word, I want to make some opening comments. I want to actually take us back for a moment to June 20, 1986, the day on which this Legislature, in a previous incarnation, in the 33rd Parliament, passed Bill 94, the banning of extra-billing. On that occasion, my leader had this to say:

“This is indeed a historic day. For our party, it is a day of celebration. It is a day of victory for the people of this province. It is yet another step along the way to the best health care system in the world, one that should belong not to any one profession or any group of people who work in the system but to all the people of the province.

“That is why the battle about extra-billing has to be seen in this great, historic context. It has to be seen in the context not just of a battle that has taken a few years or a year or six months but of one that has been the work of working people all over this country who at different times and in different places have taken on a great cause.

“In an economy that defines so much by what one can afford, in an economy that tends to define everything in terms of the cash nexus, in terms of the market relationship, those people have struggled for generations to make a basic social statement and to try to build an institution that is based on a different principle: that when it comes to health care, there should be no cash nexus, no marketplace. When it comes to health care, there should be only one thing, a commitment to making sure everyone has an equal right to health and to access to a service that is there not as a business, not as a corporation, not as a profit-making institution but as a fully insured service for people.”

I have said before in the Legislature on a number of occasions that the day was particularly gratifying for members of the New Democratic Party, gratifying not only because of the role Tommy Douglas had in convincing the people of Canada that they should make a social contract about access to health care, but also to us in a very personal way here in Ontario. Many of us, either as members of the Legislature or as members of the party in our riding associations, had participated in a number of campaigns over the years to try to convince successive governments of this province that extra-billing should not be tolerated.



I personally remember a campaign in 1977 in which many of us went out into our neighbourhoods, talked to our neighbours and solicited their signatures on a major petition which was presented in this Legislature. That was part of the reason why it was so gratifying nine years later that, as a condition of the accord that the New Democratic Party signed with the Liberal Party, extra-billing would be banned as one of the first legislative initiatives of the 33rd Parliament and the Liberal government that was allowed to take power by the workings of the accord.

We were all exceeding proud of those of our colleagues who had worked so hard for so long to build a health care system that would indeed be accessible and that—

**Mr. Sterling:** How can the member for Lake Nipigon (Mr. Pouliot) hold up his head when listening to this speaker?

**Mr. Reville:** The member for Lake Nipigon never has any trouble keeping his head up, I should point out to the member for Carleton (Mr. Sterling).

Perhaps the reason why this set of Health estimates may be more interesting than the estimates process normally is, is that I think by the workings of government policy, either spoken policy or tacit policy, what is now seen by many observers of the health care scene, many users of health care and by providers of health care, many would-be users of health services, is that increasingly the social contract that we negotiated one with another in this country is being eroded and that access to health services is being rationed.

It is not being rationed following a discussion by policymakers that this service will be provided or this service will not be provided. It is being rationed in a hidden way, in a way that is masked with mythology and with rhetoric. It is a system in which people have to form a line to wait for services. They have been advised by their physicians that they need a particular kind of procedure and they are placed on a waiting list. That is a way by which the government has reduced its financial liability in terms of providing services that it alleges are there for all, and about which we hear in glowing terms frequently from this Minister of Health in the Legislature when we raise the real-life cases of people who have had to wait for some kind of service that they need.

I think there has to be a recognition that technology and science have made various kinds of treatment and various types of procedures possible that would never have been possible in

years past and that, in fact, the march of science and the advances of technology operate somewhat independently of a government's ability to make policy. There are so many examples that it is somewhat difficult to decide just where to start, but one of the examples that comes immediately to mind has to do with traumatic head injury.

We have heard, and I know all members of the Legislature have heard, from parents and relatives of people who have suffered head injuries which at one point in the development of health science would have proved fatal. The relatives, parents and friends would have had to mourn the loss of a loved one, but today the trauma units and the procedures that have been developed by the medical profession and those health professionals who work with the medical profession have become so successful that life can be maintained.

We are now confronted with a problem that did not exist before. If a young man in an accident falls off a motorcycle and sustains a massive injury to his head, the trauma units can go to work and they can save that young person's life. After a period during which the young person's medical condition has been stabilized, he or she is discharged into a community that is almost absolutely barren of services to support that person in an altered state. This is a person who has different capabilities than he or she had before this injury occurred.

#### 1530

So we listen with concern and often pity to people from the Head Injury Association of Toronto, who talk about their relatives who are languishing in prison, in psychiatric hospitals or in crummy boarding and lodging houses because their capabilities have been reduced as a result of the accident. They are not dead, but they are barely alive. We have but the most paltry of services to help these people regain capabilities that have been lost.

This is not to say that in that area as well great strides have not been made, because indeed they have. There do exist in various jurisdictions excellent programs in which people who have suffered a massive head injury can, in fact, learn to do the things they used to do by developing parts of their brain that they had not developed before. But such treatment is quite often very labour intensive and is definitely very expensive. The opportunities for such treatment here in Ontario are far too few.

I know that will be acknowledged by the Minister of Health, who I believe took some



action at Chedoke-McMaster Hospitals to increase our capacity to provide rehabilitation programs and assessment. Assessment is part of this whole trick of identifying problems. Once you have identified the problems, you cannot sit down and say, "Well, we have all those problems identified." You then have to identify the solutions to the problems. If you are the Minister of Health, you have to identify a way to convince the Treasurer (Mr. R. F. Nixon) to part with some more dough so that those programs can be up and running.

Just tangentially for a minute, Mr. Chairman, if you do not mind, and I know you do not, there is much that can be done in alternative ways. It is not always necessary to create fancy institutions and hire hundreds of high-priced professionals to achieve good results. There are other ministries of this government that might be prepared to entertain an increased funding for various kinds of self-help approaches.

Even as I say that, I am concerned that the advancement of self-help contains within it both a right-wing agenda and a left-wing agenda. Having recently been in the United Kingdom, I can tell members that self-help is very much on the rise there because the government has withdrawn the resources that used to provide services for people, so they have no choice but to band together to try to provide the services for themselves. Of course, those services are of quite a different nature than they would be if they were provided in a higher-technology, more institutional way. Sometimes those services are, in truth, much more accessible to the people who use them because they are the ones who have designed them for their own needs.

The left-wing agenda is to ensure that a range of alternatives is available to people. In fact, we know that on some occasions we need a highly sophisticated intervention and that on other occasions we need a much more homey kind of help. In that regard, there are examples within our health care system of good programs that do both of those kinds of things, although it is fair to say that the reliance continues to be massively on institutional medical responses to illness and the beginning, at least, of a rhetorical base issuing forth from the Minister of Health to try to rebalance the system and to try to create an attitude of people in this province that they themselves can make choices that will keep them well and improve their health without waiting for illness to strike, which will then require treatment.

I watch with somewhat bemused interest the television advertisements with the little dancing dog that I spoke about and that the minister let loose on us a few weeks ago. There is a little cartoon person. It is kind of an androgynous person—I am not sure whether the person has any gender whatsoever—and then there is a little dog that dances around and gives up drinking and smoking and sort of eats what looked like grapes, and I was a little worried that those might not be union grapes.

In any event, the dog's whole demeanor changes as soon as he or she—it was unclear; it was kind of an androgynous dog as well. It is unclear whether the minister really believes that dogs have bad health habits. My experience with animals is that their health habits are awfully good and that it is people who have bad health habits. In any event, both the little dog and the androgynous person, human, seem to be very happy by the end of the ad and they say, "Health, that's a great feeling."

I asked for my daughter's advice about whether she thought this ad was really goofy or not, and she said, "No, Dad, it's good." I had to get sorted out in that regard.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** Very bright young woman.

**Mr. Reville:** She is incredibly bright, and it has nothing whatsoever to do with the Ministry of Health, either, I want the minister to know.

I did point out at the time the minister made the announcement about "Health, that's a great feeling," that it would be really great if, in fact, people did have the ability to make healthy choices in the province. In a kind of sombre tone that was perhaps somewhat out of step with the dancing dog and the dancing humanoid, I pointed out that there are lots of people in our society, far too many people in our society, who really do not have the ability to make those healthy choices, because they are burdened down by poverty, and making choices, of course, implies having an amount of control over one's life that is not always possible when one is struggling for survival.

**Miss Martel:** On a point of order, Mr. Chairman—

**Mr. Reville:** Maybe there is no quorum in committee of supply. Is there a quorum in committee of supply?

Mr. Chairman ordered the bells rung.

1541

**Mr. Reville:** I want to extend my thanks to those members who have attended to make up the



quorum, and I want to say, through the chair, of course, that the next time I call a quorum, would they please take their time about getting here, because I have to sit down and rest my voice every now and then. Perhaps if half of the members could leave now, I will know that I have an investment in the future that I can cash at any time.

**Hon. Mr. Conway:** I thought perhaps it was a call of another kind.

**Mr. Reville:** Mr. Chairman, it is not the call of the wild, which, of course, the member for Renfrew North (Mr. Conway) hears often. Usually it is just the bell from the church in Wilno, saying it is time to have a chicken supper.

**Hon. Mr. Conway:** Agreed.

**Mr. Reville:** Agreed.

**Hon. Mr. Conway:** We are going to go to that supper together some time.

**Mr. Reville:** I would love to go to that supper with the member, because then I could explain to the constituents of Renfrew North some of the things they are probably dying to find out.

I will conclude my general remarks on the understanding that I may return to them from time to time, because I have ordered the speech with some care to ensure that it is particularly interesting to all members. That is to say, my speech will emerge in no particular order, and this will require perhaps a level of mental agility that would do us all good, to see if, in fact, the members can follow the thread here. I will sort of look around from time to time to see whether or not anyone's eyes have glazed over, and if they have, I will remind members what I am talking about. I will point it out; I will say, "This is what I am talking about now and it relates to a particular vote," and then they will immediately say, "Ah, isn't it wonderful to hear a kind of teleological speech from time to time instead of a tautological speech?"

Sometimes I get so inspired by the member for Renfrew North I can hardly contain myself, but this is not one of those times, regrettably. If the member needs to take a walk, he should go ahead, whatever call he may need to answer.

The first vote is the ministry administration. I do not have a whole lot to say about this vote, but I will none the less say a few things. For instance, I have a letter from RR 2, Washago, Ontario. It says:

"Dear Sir or Madam,

"Due to the inefficiency of either your department...this is the second letter I have written to you. Although the first letter was

written in November, I have not yet received any correspondence from your department." This letter is dated February 1. "I would have thought two months is more than adequate for a reply."

The letter in question was written to the assistive devices program, which really belongs in vote 1803, but I mention it at this stage because this is a matter about which I personally feel quite strongly, and that has to do with the turnaround time of an incoming letter and a response letter from the Ministry of Health.

**Mr. Pouliot:** How long did it take?

**Mr. Reville:** Actually, they called me later and said they still had not received a response by March. So that was November, December, January, February—almost five months, and there was no response from the health programs division of the Ministry of Health.

I frequently experience a turnaround time in terms of correspondence with the Ministry of Health that is, on the low end, at least two months. My colleague the member for Sudbury East (Miss Martel) acknowledges that that is her experience as well, and so do my colleague the member for Lake Nipigon and any other members of the House who would like to agree at this point. Some of the pages are agreeing as well. It is clear that whatever system and whoever runs the system of managing the correspondence in the Ministry of Health needs to get cracking and improve that turnaround time. It is just not adequate.

One of the things that disturbs me, actually, is that we often hear that the minister wants to preside over a system that is well planned, well managed and fairly funded. I have this down. It is a rhyme that I have learned: well planned, well managed and fairly funded. For the life of me I cannot figure out how it is that the minister would know whether the health system in Ontario was well planned, fairly funded and well managed.

As far as I am aware—and I am sure when the minister reads the Hansard of this tour de force she will pick up this question—I do not believe the Ministry of Health employs in its administration any clinical epidemiologists. For those who are not clinical epidemiologists, I will say that they are a kind of health professional who figures out what kinds of things work and what kinds of things do not work.

Here we have a health care system that is proceeding along, allegedly managed by a group of people who do not include in their numbers any group of people who can say, "Well, all those procedures in fact do not work." It is possible to make some embarrassing compari-



sons with much smaller health operations in various parts of the world, operations that are not dealing with the health of over nine million people that in fact employ not one but dozens of clinical epidemiologists who track the success rate of various kinds of medical procedures and give advice to those who would run a health care system about the kinds of things that work and the kinds of things that do not.

There is a book that is going to be published early in the new year by a friend and neighbour of mine named Dr. Michael Rachlis. I will acknowledge to members here and now, so that there will be no mistake and no shrieks of horror when members find out, that he of course is a member of the Medical Reform Group of Ontario. He is a former physician at the South Riverdale Community Health Centre and he is also a clinical epidemiologist. He has written a book that talks about some of the goofy things that are done routinely by physicians in Ontario for which there is either no benefit or a negative benefit.

This is a system that is presided over by a Minister of Health who cannot turn to anyone on her staff and say, "Does this kind of thing work or does it not?" For instance, non-small-cell lung cancer should not be treated with chemotherapy. It does not work. It is well known that it does not work. A physician who prescribes chemotherapy for non-small-cell lung cancer is prescribing a procedure that does not work, and some \$20 million annually is spent paying for this procedure that does not work. How could that be?

Recently in the press, and not only in the press but in a public relations exercise managed by the Ministry of Health, a number of epidemiological works were distributed to members of the Legislature and people in the media that talked about differing levels of particular kinds of surgical procedures from county to county in Ontario. There are some overall implications, shall I say, that particular kinds of surgical procedures are performed far more frequently in Ontario than in any other health jurisdiction in the world. One of those is gall bladder surgery.

In fact, the health risks of undergoing gall bladder surgery are very high. I do not want to make anybody who has had his gall bladder out or who wants to have it out perhaps later on today nervous, but complications from gall bladder surgery are not uncommon, and the incidence of gall bladder surgery in Ontario is higher than in any comparable health jurisdiction in the world.

Likewise, the incidence of hysterectomy is higher in Ontario than anywhere in the western

world. What does this have to say? Is this something to do with sexual politics, or is it something to do with fee schedules? I am not sure what the reason is, but what is clear is that more women undergo hysterectomies in Ontario, proportionately, than in other western health jurisdictions.

The same is true for the number of women who deliver babies by caesarean section, and there are some contra-indications of caesarean section, particularly if women are interested in having quite a large number of children. Why is that? The Ministry of Health does not know and it should. I was quite irritated—in fact, I was more than irritated; I was damn mad—when the minister said that it was almost as though these things were going on in some kind of system that she had nothing to do with. Why did she not know that stuff and why was she not doing something about it?

Who pays for all these procedures? Of course, the taxpayer pays for all these procedures. However, this particular dollop of the taxpayer's money is routed through the Ministry of Health, and it certainly makes you wonder.

Another kind of discipline that does not seem to be particularly well represented in the ministry administration is the discipline of health economy. Health economists are the people who can look at the things that work and say, "Well, this is what they cost." The ministry does not know what works and it does not know what it costs. That is reassuring.

They do a lot of other things there in the ministry administration, at least judging by the table of contents. They develop systems. They have something called the district health councils, which are being elevated into some kind of dream health planning agency. I am not aware that the district health councils have any capability of doing this kind of comprehensive health planning, but they have now got a co-ordinator, a person for whom I have a good deal of respect, because she used to be the co-ordinator of Metro health services. I had an occasion to have some business with that particular public servant, and I am sure that she will do the best she can with the district health councils, but there are serious problems with the whole concept of district health councils that need to be addressed and need to be addressed under vote 1801. Some of us who are very, very old will remember the hopes we had when the idea of district health councils was brought forward a number of years ago.



The older you get, sometimes the more dashed your hopes can be because my experience with district health councils is that they have performed one function very well. That function is that they have been a very absorbent flak-catcher for the Ministry of Health. Those who have health proposals are invited—nay, urged; nay, directed—to the district health council with their proposals.

The district health council reviews the proposals with great care, ranks each proposal with great care and sends these rankings off to the Ministry of Health. Of course, the Ministry of Health pays absolutely no attention to those rankings whatsoever. It quite often just drives right around the district health council's recommendations and does something else. The other things that the Ministry of Health does, one might suspect if one were modestly cynical, quite often have something to do with politics.

District health councils, I observe, are not particularly representative. I worry particularly about the role of district health councils that is positive in the Graham report. I do not imagine that any of the district health councils that I know about are going to be able to go forth and develop a community mental health plan that would be worth anything very much because, of course, they do not include a user's perspective or a relative's perspective. They are dominated by a professional perspective. That just will not do at all.

There is something called the health innovation fund under vote 1801. This is a fund that is rumoured to exist. In fact, it has some money attached to it. It seems to have about \$10 million attached to it. One is drawn to the description of the health innovation fund. It is "to test and evaluate new approaches to improving the health status of Ontario residents and to foster new service delivery models." That would be a laudable goal for sure.

It is under the direction of the Premier's Council on Health Strategy and "is designed to encourage community groups, health care providers, researchers and others to submit proposals." Then it describes the kind of proposals that could be submitted.

Because I have the honour to receive the minister's speeches fairly close to the time—

Interjection.

**Mr. Reville:** The minister says she does not include the jokes. For that small mercy, I am very grateful, Mr. Chairman. If I really get desperate, I will recount to you some of the Minister of Health's jokes. Perhaps we could all go into an in

camera session because some of them are not suitable for family viewing. Most of them are not suitable for laughing at, either. Clearly, one of the other kinds of professionals the minister needs in her administrative division is a joke writer—for sure, a joke writer.

I read a speech of the minister in which she went to the Ontario Hospital Association and said, "Come and get all the health innovation fund." That worried me a lot because I thought this was to encourage community groups, not to encourage hospitals. Hospitals, of course, need some encouragement right now, but we will get to that in the next section.

1600

There is a group, for instance, that I think would be an ideal recipient of bucks from the health innovation fund. That would be a group like Street Health, which operates out of All Saints Church. It is designed to serve the most vulnerable members of our society, those members who, in fact, cannot get service at hospitals, who cannot get service from physicians, because their arrangements are not particularly permanent. In fact, they are thrown out of a lot of hospitals, quite frankly, because their life is so grim that quite often they do not behave themselves in a pleasant, middle-class manner, and sometimes they smell. Certainly many of them suffer infestations of lice. Some of the primary health care that they need is being provided by Street Health, which is run by some people of faith, some community workers and some nurses who provide their time virtually for free.

This is a project that has knocked on the minister's door umpteen times, and has been told to go and make a deal with St. Michael's Hospital. Can members believe that the ministry would say to a group representing street people, "Go off and make a deal with the board of St. Michael's Hospital"? Do members know who is on the board of St. Michael's Hospital? I do not know either. They normally have their discussions, not at All Saints' drop-in centre, but at the Sutton Place, sort of corporate types.

In any event, Street Health does not want to run its program out of St. Michael's Hospital because it says it is an alternative to a hospital program. It is an alternative to the very system that has rejected the people in question, and the people in question do not want to go on their hands and knees to the board of St. Michael's Hospital to beg them to flow their money.

Just going back to district health councils for a minute—and I may pick this up again under vote



1804, mental health program—this is another neat example of the crap that is involved in some of these bureaucratic mazes that have been created by the Ministry of Health. There is a little self-help group in Ottawa made up of ex-psychiatric patients.

**Mr. Miller:** They were not created by our government.

**Mr. Reville:** The member for Norfolk (Mr. Miller) points out that many of these bureaucratic mazes were not created by his government, and that is true. However, I want to point out that his government is in charge now and has to bear the responsibility for whatever bureaucratic mazes it may have inherited, whatever bureaucratic mazes it may now be creating and whatever bureaucratic mazes it may seek to create in the future.

This particular case is a perfect example of what is wrong with some of these inhuman approaches to problems. I am talking about a group of ex-psychiatric patients who basically want to run a little self-help service in Ottawa. It is led by a tough and determined woman named Sue Clark, who lives in Ottawa, who is very embarrassed to talk about being an ex-psychiatric patient, but thought it was important that she do that, to try to give some support to other people who she knew had similar problems.

They started a little group, and they have been going around trying to get a bit of money so they can have a little office and maybe a drop-in centre or whatnot. One of the things they are interested in is providing some housing programs and they are trying to go about doing that.

Sue was down in Toronto not long ago and she dropped in to see me. I asked her what she was up to, and she said she had just been to see the people over at community mental health in the Ministry of Health, on the umpteenth floor of the building in which the Ministry of Health is housed. She wanted to talk to them about a little idea that she had. What they gave her was a form that was about 50 pages long, which she was to fill out and submit to the district health council, I guess, in the Ottawa-Carleton region.

Sue thought this was one of the craziest things she had ever encountered, and she pointed out to me she had encountered a heck of a lot of crazy things, but this 50-page form did not have anything to do with what those people wanted to do. It had to do with how you make an application to a district health council. It is the sort of thing that large institutions can fill up in a minute; they have hundreds of scribes filling out forms to the DHC. It is not the sort of thing that

enables or empowers self-help groups to get access to the programs of this government. That system has to change.

There is a very specific little item under the ministry administration that I want to just touch on for a moment. It is the Lieutenant Governor's Board of Review. This is a unique kind of operation because it is required because of the way the Criminal Code has decided to deal with people who are not guilty by reason of insanity or who are unfit to stand trial.

This is at the nexus that I talk about where the criminal justice system and the health care system meet and the board reviews the cases of those who are detained under a Lieutenant Governor's warrant. We call them LGWs in the business. There has been a lot of chat about LGWs lately following an unfortunate incident in London. I have said before, and I will repeat again, I have appreciated the minister's measured response to the difficult issues raised by the responsibility of this government to provide care for patients detained under the Lieutenant Governor's warrant and also to protect the public safety and those two obligations are not easy ones to discharge.

Traditionally, the Lieutenant Governor's Board of Review has created a number of problems of its own. I think the situation is somewhat better now, but for many years many civil rights advocates were appalled at the lack of appropriate procedural protections for people who were appearing before the Lieutenant Governor's Board of Review. Part of that occurred because the original chair of the Lieutenant Governor's Board of Review basically invented the procedure and I do not think he remembered very much civil procedure jurisprudential protection when he did that.

This is an operation that costs about \$1 million a year. Many people who have appeared before the Lieutenant Governor's Board of Review feel very strongly that they do not get a fair hearing there even today. I have had the opportunity to appear before the Lieutenant Governor's review board on two occasions a year apart, both in respect of the same appellant, and could not believe what a kangaroo court was being operated there. As I say, I believe the procedural protection of appellants has improved somewhat. I believe there is still some distance to go. I think it would be incumbent upon the Minister of Health to have some conversations with her colleague the Attorney General (Mr. Scott) and take a look at the procedures currently in force at the Lieutenant Governor's Board of Review with



a view to recommending some changes. If my recollection is correct, the Criminal Code of Canada is silent as to what the procedure should be.

While the Minister of Health is chatting with the Attorney General, she might ask him to make some representations to our federal cousins, because in fact there have been in Orders and Notices for some time some amendments to the Criminal Code of Canada that would have greatly improved, I think, the way in which people who had been charged with a criminal offence and were found not guilty because of reason of insanity or because they were unfit to stand trial will be dealt with. I think it is way past time that those abuses were corrected. Currently in Ontario there are 400 people detained on Lieutenant Governor's warrants in various places under various inadequate information management systems.

I think one of the most difficult questions for a society to answer is how to treat people who may not be considered treatable by physicians and who are not popular at all. There is just not a whole lot of sympathy extended to many LGWs, perhaps because many of them have been accused of committing particularly gruesome acts. I can see no justification, however, for depriving people of their simple civil liberties, nor do I see any justification for the inhumane treatment that is sometimes dished out by the Lieutenant Governor's Board of Review and in those places where such people are detained. A lot has been said about that over the years, and perhaps when I get to vote 1804 I will say some more.

I want to move to the second vote. I will note the passage of an hour and I would like to ask you, Mr. Chairman, if you would see if we could get a quorum.

Mr. Chairman ordered the bells rung.

1614

**Mr. Chairman:** The member for Riverdale may proceed.

**Mr. Reville:** I want to thank all those members who proceeded at such a stately pace to make up this quorum. That allowed me to find some more pieces of paper.

Vote 1802 is the biggie in the Ministry of the Health estimates. This is a number that is hard even to imagine—you have to be a politician to be able to say these numbers—\$6,068,462,500.

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** That has to be institutions.

**Mr. Reville:** The member for Windsor-Riverside (Mr. D. S. Cooke) has correctly

guessed that this has to be institutions. I think I have just said a whole mouthful, that almost half—44 per cent, I guess, is the most recent number that stays in my mind—of the expenditure of the Ministry of Health is being spent on institutions, and the institutions include 222 public hospitals and a lot of nursing homes. How many?

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** It is 32,000 beds.

**Mr. Reville:** It is 32,000 beds in nursing homes and probably some other stuff that I cannot think of right now.

I guess the biggest message that has come out in the last year or so is that in the institutional sector—and this is not exclusively in the institutional sector; it is also occurring in the community health sector as well—the biggest single issue, at least in my view, has to do with the shortage of nurses. The Ontario Hospital Association might not agree that that was the biggest issue. They would probably want me to say that the biggest issue was the squeeze on their budgets and the exponential growth in the demand for hospital services.

They are not wrong. There is a squeeze on their budgets, there is a demand for additional services and there are expenses that hospitals are incurring that they did not once incur. Prophylaxis in connection with acquired immune deficiency syndrome, for instance, has increased the expenditure that every hospital must make, and that is not always reflected in the amount of money that is transferred to hospitals by the ministry. Clearly that is something the hospital association and we must address, the way in which hospitals are funded and the kinds of services hospitals are expected to provide.

We have raised in the Legislature over the last year, certainly during the time when I have been Health critic and before that, the real-life stories of people who need, usually, surgical procedures and who cannot get them, not because there are no hospital beds—it does not appear to be a bed shortage—but because there are not in place the staff to serve the people who would appear in those beds. There are just so many stories.

In March I had a phone call from a middle-aged woman who had rheumatoid arthritis. Her day surgery had been scheduled for January 18. On that very day they rescheduled her for March 7, and then they postponed that surgery again. The hospital at which she was to have the surgery said it was because it did not have enough intensive care nurses, so it had backed up all the surgery. The woman was very worried that she



would lose her job, because she had already been off work for a long, long time.

**1620**

Health critics particularly, but members of the provincial parliament in general, get a lot of mail from people who have had a real experience in the health care system of Ontario and who have found the health care system to be absolutely wanting. Here is a woman who went into Toronto Western Hospital on November 26, 1987. She had a spinal injury and on December 2 had an operation, a spinal fusion of the L-4 to the sacrum. When you have an operation on your back like that, you can barely move. You are very much in need of assistance to perform the most simple of acts.

My correspondent found the experience hair-raising. There were 34 patients on the ward. Many of the patients were on intravenous. There were five patients who had just had surgery, so they were all post-op. There were only four nurses on duty. Pain medication for my correspondent had been prescribed for six o'clock in the morning. My correspondent was in tears and frantic by the time the medication for pain was administered at 7:15 a.m. The head nurse was very frustrated.

How about a bath that took two-and-a-half hours to complete because the nurses had to do so many other things? My correspondent was worried about the totally demoralized attitude among the nurses, who cared so much and who were so good at their jobs but were unable to perform their duties properly, because they had too much to do.

The minister knows about this problem. We had the flying moms and tots episode last January. "Triplets' Mom Flown to Kingston because Toronto Could Not Cope." The mayor of Toronto, of course, probably flew into a total fit when he had to read in the paper that Toronto could not cope. "Critically Ill Newborn Infant had to be Airlifted to Buffalo." All the high-risk baby wards were full.

My friend at the Patients' Rights Association tells me that access to health care is just not there at all on weekends and holidays. She wondered whether it was acceptable to have a Monday-to-Friday, nine-to-five health care system. She thought that was pretty weird when you had a government that decided people should be able to shop seven days a week. "Out of the other side of its mouth," she said. "Don't have a baby on a holiday, just go shopping instead."

The Patients' Rights Association wrote to the minister several times. "Many expectant mothers

have reported to us that the obstetrician has told them that if the child arrives in the night, over a weekend or on a holiday, he or she will not attend the birth. The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario has issued instructions to the members that the patients should be made aware of this. We suggest to our members that they ask the question first, and if the answer was unsatisfactory, there might be time to find another doctor."

Patients who are unfortunate enough to become ill or be in an accident during a weekend or on holiday are routinely denied adequate care because of reduced staff at these times. I talked to a young nurse at the Wellesley Hospital who was working in the intensive care unit. Because of the reduction of staff at that hospital and on that unit, she had four patients to deal with, all of whom were in life-threatening situations. If two of them had gone into crisis at the same time, she could not have managed the situation at all. At the end of a 12-hour shift, when there are four people's lives depending on your ability to sprint from room to room, members can imagine how wrung out you are going to feel.

The fracture clinic of at least one downtown hospital closes up completely at five o'clock. What do you do if you break a bone after five o'clock? I never discovered what the Minister of Health responded to that. She probably said, "We have a well-planned, well-managed, fairly funded system."

That is pretty specific; we will leave that one to another time. That was the flying-moms-and-tots situation.

The minister, when confronted with the nursing shortages, at first tried to suggest that this was a cyclical problem; it would somehow go away. I do not believe that is her view now, and I hope it is not, because a significant amount of advice to the contrary has been given to the minister, not only by her own Advisory Committee on Nursing Manpower but also by the recent report of the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario, which commissioned a study by Noah Meltz and Joe Marzetti called *The Shortage of Registered Nurses: An Analysis in a Labour Market Context*.

That study was released just recently. It is not that one. I have piles of stuff here, Mr. Chairman. You should not feel at all alarmed that I am going to run out. I put the study somewhere. One needs ever larger amounts of storage space just to keep the studies that are generated by the—

**Miss Martel:** Are you okay?



**Mr. Reville:** I am okay, and even if this were not the real study, I could say it was and people would not know the difference. But in fact it is the real study and it shows a person lying on a stretcher in a corridor. The title is, Sorry, No Care Available Due To Nursing Shortage. I think that came out, maybe, on November 10—no. Recently, anyway.

It has been responded to by the Ontario Nurses' Association, which was modestly critical of the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario for not hammering the government harder than it did as to the government's responsibility in dealing with the nursing shortage. But notwithstanding this professional dispute about how hard to hammer the government or how softly to hammer the government, the study clearly found that there is a shortage of hospital nurses.

**1630**

One of the proofs of the labour shortage in Metropolitan Toronto is that hospitals are paying more than the Ontario Nurses' Association rate to agencies to obtain nurses. Among the reasons cited for the shortage of nurses is the replacement of nursing support staff by registered nurses. This is a problem that is not confined to the Metro area either. It seems to be endemic in hospital staffing approaches these days to reduce the number of support staff that is available to assist nurses in doing all the things that need to be done on a ward.

I spoke with a porter at the Wellesley Hospital not too long ago who said that it had been the practice to have a porter on each floor of the hospital and now he is working five floors, so in fact there was a fivefold decrease in the number of staff and a fivefold increase in the amount of work. The upshot of that, of course, is that more of the portering falls on the backs of the nursing staff, and that just creates another stress that has to be carried by the nursing staff.

One of the other phenomena, particularly in the Metro area, is the shift to part-time work by many nurses who previously had been full-time staff nurses. It has been explained to me by many nurses that the shift work is so burdensome and the stress experienced during those shifts is so difficult to bear that it is much better to go on a part-time basis, where they have some chance to pick their shifts and manage the other parts of their lives more than they would be able to do if they were staff nurses working those kinds of shifts.

I spoke to a nurse who told me that one of her friends had joined the housekeeping staff to

escape the stress of her job. Basically, a health professional had decided it would be better to work as a cleaner than to work as a nurse.

I spoke to a number of young nurses who said they were going to leave the profession because the rewards they could foresee in the future were so few that in spite of the fact they had invested a number of years of their lives in obtaining a bachelor of nursing science, they were just going to throw it all in. Many nurses have left the profession and gone off to sell real estate in this hot real estate market, where perhaps they may feel better control over their lives.

We in this party have urged the minister to take action in respect of the status of nursing in relation to other parts of the health system, and the minister says she is developing a regulation under the Public Hospitals Act that will reconstitute the medical advisory committee of hospitals into a professional advisory committee on which nurses will be invited to sit. Yes, we would welcome that. Regrettably, that is not nearly enough.

One of the difficulties, of course, is that nurses have very little say in how the hospital is managed and a lot of responsibility for the decisions made by others. The lack of appreciation for their skills is one of the reasons many seek to reduce their involvement in the profession and some leave it altogether.

This is an interesting fact many members probably do not know—the member for Middlesex (Mr. Reycraft) probably does not know this fact—which is that the largest occupation in Canada is nursing. I did not know that fact. Three quarters of nurses work in hospitals, 96.5 per cent of nurses are women, 42 per cent of nurses work part-time—

**Mr. Reycraft:** Four per cent of the nurses are men.

**Mr. Reville:** No, 3.5 per cent of nurses are male.

**Mr. Reycraft:** That does not add up to 100.

**Mr. Reville:** I hope the member for Middlesex did not teach mathematics—96.5 and 3.5 is not 100? Mr. Chairman, will you discipline that member, please? If he is going to interject, could he at least add properly, or perhaps it was a problem of subtraction.

**Ms. Collins:** Your argument doesn't add up.

**Mr. Reville:** I am going to find out what the member's name is and I am going to say something to her. I know the member's name; I just cannot think of her riding. The member for Wentworth East (Ms. Collins) says my argument



does not add up. I think that is what the member said. Did the member say that? This is the argument of her sisters, the nurses, actually. It is not my argument. I am just sharing it with the member.

**Mr. Pouliot:** The member should at least blush.

**Mr. Reville:** She should blush.

One of the things the Registered Nurses Association of Ontario said to me some long time ago was that the association's policy on health care reform would be to establish mechanisms to "involve nurses, other providers and consumers in decision-making about resource allocation and policy and program development."

The RNAO, by the way, is also quite interested in seeing a movement towards remuneration by salary of all health professionals and a move away from the fee-for-service approach. I think that is interesting.

The Ontario Nurses' Association, speaking to the same point—this by Glenna Cole Slattery, who is the chief executive of the Ontario Nurses' Association. This will make one think. "Strained backs from hefting 200-pound patients by themselves, slipping on faecal matter on floors and breathing poisonous chemotherapy concoctions are a few of the workplace hazards facing registered nurses today."

The nursing shortage means nurses face greater risks of injury and their concerns are increasing about occupational health and safety for their members. They clearly have a large number of back injuries. I have talked to a number of nurses who work with head-injured patients, and most of them have bad backs and many of them have had surgery on their backs. This, of course, is a function of the reduction in staff. At one time, orderlies were available to help move patients around and they are not now.

I might come back to vote 1802 in a minute when I dig into my box here and find some more stuff, because I have lots more stuff in there that is interesting and worrisome.

**1640**

I want to turn for a moment to vote 1803, the emergency and special health services section.

I have been handed a note signed "a friend." The note says, "The automatic TV camera operator just fell asleep." Of course, the conflict-of-interest legislation prohibits me from getting any fee for this service I have provided to the automatic TV camera operator, and I should say to those within the sound of my voice, any time they are having insomnia, they can just tune in to this speech and will be cured instantly.

Under the third vote of the Ministry of Health estimates, called emergency and special health services, I have a number of remarks to make, some of which are especially topical, some of which are less topical and some of which may not fit here at all, but I will do them anyway.

The emergency and special health services program is dominated by the drug benefit plan, about which I have a number of things to say, and the second-largest part of this almost \$600-million item relates to emergency health services, the most common of which, and probably the ones that would come most readily to your mind, if you still had one, are ambulance services.

We know that just this week Jack Shapiro tabled the final report of the Commission of Public Inquiry into Ambulance and Emergency Health Services Delivery in the Province of Ontario. A number of members of the Ontario Public Service Employees Union who work as ambulance officers were in the gallery today, and in fact were involved in an MPP lobby, I suspect, today. I had the opportunity to address them, about 100-strong, perhaps more, in our caucus room during question period today.

Members will be interested to know, I am sure, that the commissioner is a person who is known to me. He used to be the chairman of the local board of health for the city of Toronto, has a great interest in public health and was clearly a good choice to inquire into the provision of ambulance and emergency health services delivery.

I had the opportunity to appear before this inquiry when it was in Orillia. Some members will know the Highwayman Inn from a different visitation there with another committee that wanted to listen to the people about some other matters. Well, it was in the same place and I can tell members that on that occasion, the chlorine seemed to be pretty strong too.

Jack Shapiro gathered information from a lot of sources. He was busy identifying problems, considering the impact of the problems and making recommendations.

The overall conclusion was that "there is a great inconsistency in the level of service being provided throughout the province, and, "A greater level of consistency is essential if there is to be a semblance of equity in the distribution of ambulance services."

This will provide some encouragement to members of the government. He noted: "The ministry has put in place a system which in many parts of the province is comparable to the best available in many jurisdictions in North Ameri-



ca. Unfortunately, its performance has been thwarted by a failure of successive governments to show the political will necessary to rationalize and bring consistency to the service."

Shapiro observed that the Spasoff report to the ministry concluded that "equity is the primary principle upon which health planning should be based. In the provision of ambulance services in Ontario, equity does not appear to be a primary principle at all." Fragmented ownership, inadequate funding, lack of clear ministerial policies regarding allocation of resources were found to be the key reasons for the inconsistency and inequity of service.

Jack Shapiro concluded that there are structural problems in the delivery of emergency services in Ontario. There is a structure that involves six different forms of ownership.

"Full funding comes from the Ministry of Health and has no firm goals or policies upon which to base the allocation of vehicles and staff. There is great inconsistency in the training of ambulance officers in the provision of advanced life-support services. The ambulance division has failed, clearly, to convince the ministry"—or perhaps the ministry has failed to convince cabinet—"that increased funding is necessary to provide consistent levels of service and remuneration for staff."

It is interesting to note that in the last few years, the number of volunteer ambulance brigades has increased dramatically. Volunteers who normally spend their time teaching school or selling real estate are hopping into ambulances to respond to calls.

It is my view, and in this regard I take a view contrary to Jack Shapiro's, that it is the province that should be responsible for the provision of ambulance services, not the municipalities. I would be very concerned that would continue the fragmentary approach. Of course, there are unorganized areas of the province and municipalities that perhaps would have other public policy objectives for their dollars.

Members will not be surprised to know, as well, that I favour a not-for-profit ambulance service. I find it a form of vertical integration that is nervous-making that the company that operates the ambulance also operates the hearse and the funeral home. Without being macabre, one can imagine that the response time becomes an issue in this regard.

There are 175 ambulance services in this province; 66 of them are owned and operated by hospitals, 65 are operated by the private sector, 28 are volunteer—I think that has increased even

since the report was put together—and there are nine ministry-owned-and-operated ambulance services.

One of the things I was not aware of until this afternoon is that it is only the Ministry of Health's employees who are considered to be part of an essential service. All other ambulance officers are not considered to be part of an essential service.

Four ambulance services are run by municipalities, including the municipality of Metropolitan Toronto, and three are run through a ministry tendering process. That is probably a fascinating process.

I understand there are 2,300 full-time and 1,600 part-time ambulance workers in Ontario.

There is a perception that many ambulance services, although not all, are characterized by inflexible, insensitive and archaic management practices. These attitudes are seen to be reinforced by the ministry.

Ambulance officers suffer from burnout, stress, frustration and feelings of being badly undervalued.

There is mention made of the ghost at the bargaining table. Of course, the ghost is the ministry, which controls the money. Ambulance services are 100 per cent funded by the Ministry of Health, with the exception of Metro Toronto, and therein hangs a tale. The deal was that the Ministry of Health would fund 75 per cent of Metro's approved cost but usually comes up with 56 per cent. Metro is being tapped on the wrist for making what the ministry calls unapproved expenditures. These unapproved expenditures, of course, have to do with better wages and better vehicles.

Jack Shapiro notes, and I agree with him, that "The variety in the forms of ownership does not serve the public interest and this system needs to be rationalized."

Perhaps there are no supporters of privatization in the Legislature, but just in case there are, Jack Shapiro notes:

"Supporters of privatization traditionally argue that the private operators can deliver better services at lower costs. An analysis of the submissions to the commission does not support the better service part of the equation and lower costs are only realized because of the lower level of remuneration for the ambulance officers they employ." Here is a little pat on the head to the Ministry of Health: "The ministry-run ambulance services provide the best level of service outside of Metropolitan Toronto." Congratulations. Regrettably, there are only nine ministry-



owned-and-operated services, and that leaves 166 that are not as good.

Apparently, in certain circumstances, because of the absolute unavailability of vehicles, there are periods when there is no local service available at all. One of the issues that comes fairly readily to mind in respect to emergency services is the amount of time it takes to get the emergency service to the emergency. In the ambulance business they call that the response time.

The maximum allowable elapsed time between the occurrence of a trauma or a cardiac incident and the arrival of an ambulance at the scene should be no more than five minutes if loss of life is to be kept to a minimum. The ministry reports that the average response time, measured from when the ambulance is dispatched rather than from the occurrence of the incident, is about 9.9 minutes. That is almost twice as long as the maximum allowable elapsed time. In Metro Toronto the response time is closer. It is about 6.3 minutes.

The average response time outside of Metro Toronto is about 12 minutes and would be even higher if elapsed time between occurrence and dispatch of the vehicle were taken into account. I quote: "It would not be an exaggeration to say that the total prehospital time from the placing of the emergency call to the delivery of the patient to definitive medical treatment would be close to half an hour outside of Metro." He concludes: "Clearly, some avoidable loss of life must be occurring."

There are a lot of factors that determine response time. Some of them are the size of the investment the government is prepared to make in the service. Response times obviously improve as you increase the number of vehicles, the number of stations, the number of ambulance officers. An improved response time is available at a price. It is not only the price of the provision of dollars, but it is the price of the provision of integration and a management plan.

The Ministry of Health, in its guidelines for planners of emergency services, has developed a response time for large urban communities—that is, communities over 300,000. That goal would be a four-minute, basic life-support response and an eight-minute, full, advanced life-support response. Clearly the ministry has fallen short of its own goals even in the best-served areas of this province.

There are a number of important recommendations that Mr. Shapiro made; some of them I have already mentioned. One of the goals that Shapiro

recommends for the government's consideration is that allocations to ambulance services—personnel, vehicles, equipment and stations—should be made equitably across the province on the basis of the goal of being capable of bringing a patient to hospital within 15 minutes of receiving an emergency call for 90 per cent of the population. Clearly that is not currently possible.

In the context of the tabling of the Commission of Public Inquiry into Ambulance and Emergency Services in Ontario, we have a labour dispute that has also been mentioned today in question period. Some of the parties to that dispute were in the Legislature as well. There are 85 ambulance officers of Halton-Mississauga Ambulance Services Ltd. who have been on strike since August 10, 1988. The strike is in its fourth month, and because of the strike, of course, the quality of ambulance service has deteriorated for people in the Halton-Mississauga area. This service is 100 per cent funded by the Ontario government, but it is owned and operated on a commercial basis by Halton-Mississauga Ambulance Services Ltd.

This is a very good example of the unequal, fractured service that Jack Shapiro documented in this report, tabled just a few days ago. The incident in which people of that area are being served by fewer ambulances than they should and 85 workers are waiting for some bargaining to resume, I think, is pretty symptomatic of what happens in a system that is as disparate and discontinuous as the ambulance service system we have currently in Ontario.

Halton-Mississauga is one of the 65 privately owned ambulance services that I have mentioned. Last year it got \$3.6 million from the government, and this year it will get about \$3.7 million out of the \$126-odd million that the government will spend on ambulance services. Almost \$50 million of that goes to private ambulance service.

The ambulance officers in Ontario Public Service Employees Union Local 207 have been without a contract since April 1. They are trying to get parity with the Metro ambulance officers who work the border area. If you drive one street further west, you are in the area served by Halton-Mississauga. There has been only one meeting, on September 10, and, of course, the union would like the ministry to intercede.

It is interesting to note what is happening to these ambulance officers who have similar training. They get paid \$13.94 an hour, compared to the Metro rate of \$16.65 an hour.

I could point out that you would probably get paid more if you were a provincial cabinet



minister's driver than you would if you were running an ambulance in Halton or Mississauga.

1700

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** What do they get paid?

**Mr. Reville:** Our information is that ministers' drivers get paid between \$25,400 and \$29,700. There perhaps are some variations. This information was provided to us by the human resources folks—the human resources secretariat, I guess we call that, not “folks.” We do not have any folks around here.

In Burlington, ambulance officers have been doing paramedic work for four and a half years without any pay increase at all. One company offered a \$900 one-time bonus. Of course, the workers who have this additional training would like that training to be recognized in their compensation.

Service in the area, which encompasses about three quarters of a million people in Burlington, Milton, Oakville and Mississauga, normally has 10 ambulances. The company is running five now with supervisory staff and owner-operators from other areas of the province. It is just doing emergency calls, and the central dispatch is sending out the fire department first to see if an ambulance is needed. My leader earlier today gave some examples of response times in excess of 20 minutes, which, of course, are not satisfactory.

I just received a note that a number of the ambulance officers are watching this performance on closed-circuit television and like it. I thank you for sending that note in. All the other notes I received today have indicated that people did not like it, so it is good to see that somebody does.

**Mr. Epp:** This is exciting stuff. This is what democracy is made of.

**Mr. Reville:** Well, there you go.

I get mail from other parts of the province as well that talks about ambulance services. This is a letter to the Premier (Mr. Peterson), actually, that was copied to me and, it looks like, about 15 other people. This letter says:

“Dear Mr. Peterson:

“From past documentation sent to your office, you have been made well aware of the need for improved ambulance service for this community. You have also been made aware of a number of occasions where ambulances have not been available to respond to emergency calls in an efficient matter. It should also not surprise you to learn that this situation applies to routine calls.

“In the fall of 1986, there were promises made by the Ministry of Health and ambulance services branch that new ambulance stations were going to be built to provide better ambulance coverage for the city of London and the surrounding district. To date, only one new station has been built, and it has turned out to be a replacement station and not a new one. One station has been closed and is no longer being used on a permanent basis now that the new location has become operational. There has been no word as to the completion date of these two new stations or when there will be a manpower increase to make these stations functional.”

The letter goes on to say: “It has been 18 months since the promise was made, and we are not the only ones concerned with the level of staffing provided for this community. Last week, there was a request for a patient to be transferred to Hamilton, and when it was apparent that no ambulances were readily available or would be for some time, there was a call made from your office requesting a reason why there were no ambulances available.”

Enclosed with the document were—what would they be called? It is actually a record of delays in response. Here is a delay of two hours and 20 minutes. It indicates the time on a 24-hour clock and the reason, the call number and the delay in each case: “All cars out on high-priority calls,” “All cars out on 4s,” “Too busy,” “Too busy,” “Busy,” “Busy,” “Insufficient vehicles.” This covered a period of from just before 11 o'clock in the morning to just after five o'clock in the afternoon, and the delays ranged from six minutes to two hours and 20 minutes.

I think it is pretty clear that it is the government's responsibility to provide more than patchwork emergency services. I think it is the government's responsibility as well to ensure that such services as are provided are not provided on the backs of the workers who are providing them. In my experience, it is fairly common that people who do vital work are often expected to subsidize that work, in effect, because their wages are low. I do not think that is right at all. People should be properly compensated for the kinds of services they are providing. The ministry should attend to that situation, which has been carefully documented and about which I do not believe there should be any dispute whatsoever.

One of the other programs under vote 1803 is one that we have talked about a great deal and that is of special concern to me. It is the Ontario drug benefit plan, which was estimated to cost in



1987-88—holy smokes—close to \$500 million. In December of last year I raised a number of concerns in respect of the Ontario drug benefit plan. Following that, in the brief session we had in February I raised the matters again, as did my leader. I want to review some of that material now.

What has happened, of course, is that following our short winter session last year the Minister of Health asked Dr. Lowy, "To review all aspects of the government's role and influence in the prescription drug marketplace, specifically to examine the current drug programs operated by the government; their past, present and future trends in relation to government's objectives; the most effective ways to ensure quality of care and quality assurance of drugs under the ODB"—that is the Ontario drug benefit plan—"the impact of the utilization of drugs on the health status of eligible recipients; the current criteria for eligibility for the government-sponsored programs," and some other stuff.

Dr. Lowy's committee is out there and has recently done some hearings, some of which were held here in Toronto quite recently and to which a number of groups have made submissions. A number of very disturbing situations have developed in Ontario that I am sure Dr. Lowy has been made well aware of and which must disturb him and his committee, as well.

**1710**

"We believe that 20 per cent of all seniors admitted to hospital have a drug problem caused by the ingestion of two or more incompatible drugs or from overmedication. That is an extremely serious health risk. The other piece of that is that if we assume that seniors account for about 40 per cent of acute care hospital patient-days, we are talking about probably \$400 million a year in terms of the cost of caring for people who have been made sick by medicine. It is really a bizarre and weird thing to have happened, that somehow our system has gone so awry that people are becoming ill from medications that are intended to make them well.

One of the things that is pointed out and has been pointed out to Dr. Lowy—this was material in a significant study on drug utilization that was available to the previous Minister of Health—is that physicians' knowledge of drugs is very low. What they tend to learn about pharmacology happens in less than 100 hours of training in medical school. Most of the knowledge that physicians have about pharmaceuticals is provided to them by detail men.

As life will have it, detail men these days are usually women, but they are basically salesmen for pharmaceutical companies. They allot about \$5,000 per physician per year to market their products and on occasion, provide various kinds of prizes and incentives if physicians will use particular kinds of drugs.

Nursing home residents often receive their medical care from the physician responsible for the entire institution. This restricts opportunities for discussion among colleagues, obviously. More frightening is the finding in the study that the use of psychoactive drugs is very high. It is at a very high rate in elderly nursing home patients. Psychoactive medications are very powerful, mind-altering chemicals that have been invented in the last two or three decades. Basically, what we have is a large number of elderly people who are absolutely zonked on medications that have been prescribed for them as a way of client control.

"Physicians with large nursing home practices are responsible for prescribing 81 per cent of all antipsychotic medications."

It is surprising to me that the government was so slow to take action in this regard, because all this information was available to it. In fact, the government has a committee composed of expert pharmacologists, called the Drug Quality and Therapeutics Committee, established by order in council to advise the government. The government declined to listen to the advice of its own DQTC.

There is some pretty amazing information that became available about the utilization of the Ontario drug benefit plan. In 1986, there were over 700 people who received more than 200 prescriptions each in one year. Can you imagine how many prescriptions that is? That is four prescriptions every single week. There was one case of a person who received 1,400 prescriptions under the drug benefit plan in one year.

I do not know what those prescriptions were for. I do not know whether the ministry's computer can figure out what they were for, but it is really hard to imagine a person being able to ingest over 100 prescriptions of medication in a month. It makes you wonder where these drugs are going, who is getting them and why.

I know the minister is sensitive in this regard and has had some experience with so-called brown bag programs in which elderly people are invited to put all the medications they may have in their medicine cabinet, in the kitchen cupboard and on the kitchen table in a bag and bring them to a place where a physician will take a look at



what is in the bag and encourage the person who has all the medications that are out of date, incompatible, stale and wrong to throw them away.

Clearly, the practice of medicine has changed to an extent where the number of people getting home visits by physicians these days is much smaller than it once was. It is pretty clear that we are a society that somehow has come to believe there is a pill for every ache. We go out and get a prescription for that pill and we keep them all in our medicine cabinet. When our friends drop over and describe their symptoms to us, we say, "I have something that will fix you right up." It is a dangerous practice to share your medications around. I know there are people who are working with seniors who are trying to discourage the nonmedical prescription of drugs that sometimes goes on.

It is one thing to waste tax dollars. It is another thing to make people sick while doing so. It is clear that control has to be gotten of the Ontario drug benefit plan. I would worry if the major tranquilizers, particularly, are finding their way on to the street and that that drug traffic is ironically being paid for by the taxpayers and funded by the government.

The Ontario drug benefit plan is an idea that is based on a good idea—that people on social assistance and the elderly should not be impoverished by having to pay for drugs they need. It is a cruel irony indeed that excessive prescription of drugs may be related to the fact that they are free. I am not one who is comforted at all by the thought of user fees and do not recommend them, although I know that some people would say that is the solution to this problem.

1720

I do not believe that is the solution to this problem. I think the problem has a number of solutions. One is a solution that is directed towards the consumer; another is a solution that is directed towards the prescribing physician, and another is directed towards the pharmacist, who should be able to keep track of what kinds of prescriptions somebody is having all at once.

I think we will all look forward to what Dr. Lowy has to say and we will hope that the government will take speedy action thereon.

That is the Ontario drug benefit plan. It is one of the most "successful" programs of the provincial government. It has grown from a modest beginning of about \$10 million to the sky is the limit, practically, half a billion in here and more to come. Part of that is the function of our ageing population; part of it is the function of the

fact that 70 per cent of all visits to a physician result in a prescription being written. There has to be a better way to do some of this stuff.

I want to let people know I have now completed the second hour and then some of this discussion today and I am certainly enjoying it a great deal. I do not have all that much further to go and I am going to make it. This will comfort all the members.

Vote 1804 is the mental health vote, and under this area we are talking about close to half a billion dollars, much of it spent on psychiatric services and, clearly, the operation of the 10 provincial psychiatric hospitals. These use up the lion's share of that money.

Mental health, as members will know, is the area in which I have the most interest and, in a number of ways, the most experience. I have a great many things that I like to say about mental health and do in fact say about mental health.

As recently as last week, I was a guest of the Ministry of Health in Oshawa at the ninth annual Ontario alternative housing conference. I do not suspect the Minister of Health was aware that I was the key speaker at that conference. The other speakers were physicians. This was a group of community mental health program people whose main interest is in the provision of supported housing to people who have had psychiatric problems. They have an annual meeting to discuss various issues, and I was very pleased to go and speak to them.

Members might be interested to know that the week after next I will be returning to England to speak for the second time this year at the annual convention of British Mind, which is equivalent, probably, to the national division of the Canadian Mental Health Association in Canada. What I will be speaking about is community mental health and a model that I have had some hand in developing for delivering community mental health services, some of which I am pleased to now find reflected in the Graham report. I am encouraged that the Minister of Health has said she intends to look at a way of implementing some of the recommendations that Mr. Graham has made.

In some ways, I think the situation in mental health is a microcosm of the situation in health in general. Once in our society we got past the notion that mental illness was caused by evil spirits or the devil or witchcraft, we developed an institutional response to "treat" people, and the treatment has varied over the years. I will not subject members to a tedious description of some of the horrifying treatments that were developed



in the early days before the invention of the psychotropic drugs. Some of the ways in which people who were considered to be mentally ill were treated were quite horrible, indeed.

We continue to maintain a mental health service system which is dominated by institutions in which the medical profession has the lead role and which, in many ways, does not seem to work at all. If you look at the situation in most of North America, you will see that usually 90 per cent of the money spent on mental health is spent on an institutional response and the remainder is spent on programs that support people when they leave the hospital.

One of the things that we need to take account of is, number one, we have decreased the number of psychiatric beds by 75 per cent in Ontario during the process that we called deinstitutionalization. We have developed medications that are so powerful that a person can be stabilized quite quickly, so that periods of hospitalization are getting shorter. The experience of people, though, is serial hospitalizations, interrupted by some kind of struggle for survival in the community for a while for those people who are not served by the increasing array of community mental health programming that is available.

I am pleased to tell the Legislature that a couple of things have happened in the last year or so that give me optimism that we may finally be starting to move in the right direction, not only here in Ontario but in Canada as a whole, where there seems to be a greater understanding of the need for mechanisms, programs and approaches which will empower people rather than disempower them. But there is always a danger, as we look at improving our community mental health service system, that all we will do is create more people who are dependent on that service system, and that would be an objective that I would not support.

I have done some work just recently on the question of user involvement. There was an international conference I spoke at recently in Brighton, England. I delivered a paper called *User Involvement in Mental Health Services in Canada*.

1730

**Mr. Cousens:** Whereabouts?

**Mr. Reville:** Brighton.

**Mr. Cousens:** In England?

**Mr. Reville:** Yes.

**Mr. Cousens:** We have a hard time listening to you here. How would they suffer it over there?

**Mr. Reville:** I actually made a much shorter, sharper speech there.

**Mr. Cousens:** If you did that, you would give us a bad name.

**Mr. Reville:** The speech was very well received, and my paper is being published by the mental health association in England, I am happy to tell the member.

**Mr. Cousens:** Would you be so kind as to send copies to members of the Legislature?

**Mr. Reville:** No, not unless the member wants to pay for them.

**Mr. Cousens:** I wouldn't pay for them, no way. There are limits beyond which we may not go.

**Mr. Reville:** The member for Markham might, however, be interested in knowing that the point of the paper was that there are some institutional barriers to recipients of services really being involved in the planning and delivery of those services. Considerable effort is going to have to be devoted, particularly towards enabling users of mental health services to be involved in the planning and implementation of the services they need.

I think the Graham report is deficient in this respect, in that it does not address the way in which a government would enable families' and friends' groups—that is the informal caring network—and user groups or self-help groups to be involved in the design and delivery of services and how those groups would be involved with the district health councils, the planning mechanism foreseen by the Graham report.

One of the things that is clear is that there are some efforts being made in parts of Canada at the moment to strengthen consumer participation that are encouraging. The government of British Columbia has recently implemented a \$500,000 program whereby ex-psychiatric patients have been hired to develop a consumer network in that province, so they can be better represented in the planning process for community mental health; this in a province that is not always known for its generosity in social services. I am very encouraged by those kinds of developments and I hope that in Ontario we will see a similar kind of progress.

There is a whole host of problems in our delivery of mental health services that need to be addressed and have not been adequately addressed, although they have been reported on over and over again. On the one extreme is the maximum security facility at Oak Ridge about

which so much has been written and about which so remarkably little has been done.

The Hucker report was tabled in 1985. The then Minister of Health indicated, at the Health estimates of that day, that the Oak Ridge facility was obsolete, outdated and had to be replaced. Recently, I think in response to a question from the local member, the member for Simcoe East (Mr. McLean), we heard the minister say that the planning process was under way to replace the facility.

I think planning needs to be done, there is no question about that. The announcements we have had indicated that a kind of recreational facility was going to be built on that site, and I do not think that has happened yet. There have been some renovations to the existing facility, but basically Oak Ridge is a dungeon. If I were the Minister of Health, I would not want to include any dungeons among my health care facilities.

There are a number of difficult issues to address here. The Oak Ridge facility is of significant economic benefit to that area. I do not know whether there is any particular reason for it to be located there. That would be a difficult issue to sort out because everybody who lives in Penetang and Midland works at the Ridge and it is a significant contributor to the local economy.

The ENCON report that came out just recently that was looking at the risk management procedures of the government in respect of psychiatric patients who are on Lieutenant Governor's warrants recommended the building of a medium-security facility here in Metropolitan Toronto or near Metro. The minister has indicated that she is going to have an interministerial group take a look at that. If the history of the replacement of Oak Ridge is an example, then it will be many years before a Minister of Health stands up and says that they are starting to plan a medium-security facility. I am not convinced that one is necessary. I would be interested in seeing the date on which the ENCON people made that suggestion.

There are some other areas in mental health which concern me.

**Mr. Cousens:** Are you going longer?

**Mr. Reville:** I am going until 6.

We had a big day in December 1985. We have two mental health reports tabled at once, I think. I think we got the Clark report at about the same time. Some may remember that the then Minister of Health asked Mr. Clark, who was a lawyer, to take a look at the question of electroconvulsive therapy. Mr. Clark did that and wrote a report, which the previous Minister of Health tabled in

the Legislature in December 1985, and a large number of recommendations were made about electroconvulsive therapy, sometimes called ECT, referred to by many consumers as shock.

One of the recommendations was that a brochure be prepared describing the procedure that would be made available to people who were being recommended for it so that they could read about what it was and make an informed decision about whether or not they wanted to have such a treatment. I should indicate at this point that there are a considerable number of people who do not see electroconvulsive therapy as treatment at all. They see it as torture.

I believe that three years later we do not have a final version of the brochure on electroconvulsive therapy, although I have seen a couple of drafts, or maybe three drafts, and I have been mildly encouraged to see that each time the draft has been somewhat improved. It would appear to me that in the absence of this material being available, the question of informed consent continues to be moot, that in fact people are still getting the treatment when they have not been given adequate information about it. That, I believe, is against the law. I think it is incumbent on the Ministry of Health to get on with this job, this job that has now been going on for almost three years, and develop adequate information so that people can make informed judgements about whether or not they want to have a particular treatment.

**1740**

In the early part of 1988, the standing committee on public accounts investigated the Provincial Auditor's findings on the adequacy of arrangements to provide and manage mental health care in the province. Among the concerns were: "the staffing facilities and utilization of the 10 provincial psychiatric hospitals; serious inadequacies in the availability and co-ordination of housing alternatives and community support programs, contributing to a revolving-door syndrome; the absence of a comprehensive management information system needed to collect and analyse data, either for management of existing facilities or the planning of new ones."

The public accounts committee caused a number of officials, including the deputy minister and the assistant deputy minister responsible for mental health care to appear before the committee and discuss their concerns. It is clear to me that a great deal more remains to be done. During the election period of 1987, the Premier announced that the money available to community mental health programming would be doubled



over three years. That would bring it to an amount that is significantly more than has been spent, clearly, in recent years.

One of the dilemmas, however, is that the existing programs have waiting lists and the existing programs have salary levels for their professionals that are well below the salary levels on the institutional side. All that money could be gobbled up in just sort of meeting the waiting lists and rectifying some of those inadequacies and inconsistencies in the current program.

In addition, it has been shown by people in the field that in the Metropolitan Toronto area we probably need an additional 7,000 units of supported housing, some of which would be the responsibility of the Ministry of Health to provide and some of which would be the responsibility of the Ministry of Housing to provide.

Clearly, the provision of supported housing is not going to make a significant dent in that demand for a long time. That will result in people who are coming out of hospital competing for an ever-decreasing supply of affordable housing. The situation is particularly severe here in Metro where even the crummiest and cheapest of housing is now probably \$80 a week. Some of that is hard to describe as housing.

Some of these problems are not entirely the responsibility of the Ministry of Health. They are the responsibility of the Ministry of Community and Social Services and in some cases the responsibility of the Ministry of Housing or the Ministry of Correctional Services. It seems that it is almost impossible to conceive of a situation in which several ministries which overlap a public policy area could ever manage to move ahead together in a co-ordinated way.

**Mr. Laughren:** Do you want a quorum call?

**Mr. Reville:** Is there no quorum?

**Mr. Laughren:** No.

**Mr. Reville:** I can wind it up. I can do 10 more minutes. I am still running. I can probably do the last 12 minutes without a quorum call.

I am particularly concerned about the conditions in some of our private boarding and lodging homes. The minister, I am sure, will remember a particularly gruesome situation in an Orillia boarding home in which the owner was charged with manslaughter. Twenty-seven charges were laid against the owner of this private boarding and lodging home. The embarrassing thing was that about 25 former residents of the Queen Street Mental Health Centre were referred to this home by ministry staff. I am happy to tell you that the

owner has been convicted and the home has been shut down.

It is a situation that is not uncommon. The ministry operates a large number of homes for special care or provides funding for a large number of homes for special care outside of Metro. Many of them are no more than warehouses for numbers of people, and the amount of anything that could be called programming that occurs in some of these places is tiny indeed. I suspect that at some time we are going to have to tackle the inadequacies of the homes-for-special-care system, which I do not believe have ever been looked at by a committee of this Legislature but very much need to be. A significant amount of public money goes into homes for special care, and the adequacy of the program they provide is seriously questionable.

In my remarks this afternoon, I have had very little to say about community health. That is not because it is not an important area; in fact, I think it is probably the most important area. I have just had so many other things to say on other topics that we have not really got there yet. It is encouraging to me, as I said earlier in my response to the ministerial statement today, to see an increase in the number of community health centres. I believe the minister has announced five in the last few days or months or weeks.

It remains my contention that the government needs to do much better than its stated goal of increasing the number of people served by twofold over the next five years. That is still a very small number of all the people of Ontario served by community health centres, and we very much need to serve a lot more than that.

There are significant advantages in providing health services through community health centres, one of which is that the community health centres can concentrate on preventive medicine and do community education about healthy lifestyles. It is important perhaps to note that one such community health centre—and I am thinking of the health centre in my own riding, the South Riverdale Community Health Centre—has been a significant player in the development of public policy because of its interest in environmental issues.

Were it not for the leadership of the South Riverdale Community Health Centre, I do not believe the contaminated soil would have been removed from my community in what has been the most significant soil replacement program that has ever been undertaken in this country.

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It was the efforts at educating and organizing the community that were part of the South Riverdale Community Health Centre's mandate that finally pushed this provincial government into agreeing to replace the soil, and I think that raised the consciousness of the people in that community and in other parts of the city about the threat to our health that environmental pollution can pose.

Similarly, the South Riverdale Community Health Centre has an occupational health and safety committee, because it serves an area that continues to have a significant number of industrial jobs, and provides an information service to the community about various occupational health and safety hazards to which they, as workers and as neighbours, are exposed.

The other part of the community health service delivery model in Ontario is the health service organization, and there too the growth has been very slow. It is an interesting nuance on the way of remunerating physicians that needs to be looked at. There continue to be a number of problems with the way the program is administered that work to the disadvantage of those who are in health service organizations.

I know this particularly because I am in close contact with the Main Street health service organization, which is on the edge of my riding and which is one of the few health service organizations that has a community board. It is not a doctor-managed health service organization but a community-directed health service organization, and it provides a service to the people in the east end of the city that is valuable and needs to be expanded and encouraged.

**Mr. Laughren:** Right on.

**Mr. Reville:** Is that not right on?

During the next seven hours of my remarks, I will have an opportunity to ask some trenchant questions of the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Mr. Conway:** Take your time. You are going to have to go to the Ed Philip school of resilience.

**Mr. Reville:** Does the minister think I am kind of flagging here?

**Hon. Mr. Conway:** Not flagging.

**Hon. Mr. Curling:** Flaking.

**Mr. Pelissero:** Sagging.

**Mr. Reville:** The government House leader unkindly suggests that I am not flagging. Mr. Chairman, I am indeed flagging. If he is trying to urge me on to more spectacular industrial heroism than he has ever seen before, I shall not

respond to such a foolhardy challenge. I have been Cool Hand Luked before, Mr. Chairman, and I will be again.

In fact, I was trying to conclude my, whatever they are, remarks—trenchant. And mordant, I believe, kind of fits with trenchant, do you not think? Probably hardly anybody knows what trenchant and mordant mean.

**Hon. Mr. Conway:** You sound like you are getting ready for the House leaders' Christmas party.

**Mr. Reville:** If the member had gone to plumbing university, as did I, he would know these words.

I have enjoyed making these initial remarks and I look forward to returning to the six votes and asking some specific questions, to which I suspect there will be no specific answers.

I thank the members for their patience and their indulgence. I think it would be appropriate, seeing that I have almost got to six of the clock, to adjourn the estimates for today.

On motion by Mr. Reville, the committee of supply reported progress.

#### LEGISLATIVE PAGES

**Hon. Mr. Conway:** Before reading the business statement for next week, I am sure the House would want me to take this occasion to observe that this group of pages will be leaving us as of this afternoon. We would all, I am sure, want to thank these wonderful young men and women for the very excellent service and good humour they have provided. Certainly all of us, the member for Nickel Belt (Mr. Laughren) and others, want to wish them all the best in their future endeavours.

#### BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

**Hon. Mr. Conway:** Pursuant to standing order 13, I would like to indicate the business of the House for the coming week.

On Monday, November 21, this House will not sit on account of the federal general election.

On Tuesday, November 22, we will continue with the estimates of the Ministry of Health just adjourned by the honourable member for Riverdale (Mr. Reville), who tells us that, like General MacArthur, he shall return.

On Wednesday, November 23, we will continue the adjourned debate on Bill 162, the Workers' Compensation Amendment Act.

On Thursday, November 24, in the morning, we will deal with private members' business standing in the names of the member for



Brampton North (Mr. McClelland) and the member for Hamilton Mountain (Mr. Charlton). In the afternoon, we will consider second reading

of Bill 122, An Act to amend the Retail Sales Tax Act.

The House adjourned at 6 p.m.

**ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS\***  
(130 seats)

First Session, 34th Parliament

**Lieutenant Governor: Hon. Lincoln M. Alexander, PC, QC**

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# Hansard

## Official Report of Debates

### Legislative Assembly of Ontario

**First Session, 34th Parliament**  
Tuesday, November 22, 1988



Speaker: Honourable Hugh A. Edighoffer  
Clerk of the House: Claude L. DesRosiers

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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday, November 22, 1988

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayers.

## LEGISLATIVE PAGES

**Mr. Speaker:** Just before I recognize the members for members' statements, I would like to ask all members to join me in welcoming the next group of legislative pages to serve in this fall session of the 34th Parliament. I will place their names on record:

Hugh Brewster, Guelph; Jeremy Broadhurst, St. George-St. David; Sonia Buligan, Wilson Heights; Marsha Buxton, Peterborough; Barry Campbell, Leeds-Grenville; Tyler Close, Essex-Kent; Joshua Conway, Lincoln; Matthew George, Willowdale; Stacey Grammick, Scarborough North; Jennifer Harrington, Niagara Falls; Christine Hug, Beaches-Woodbine; Sylvie Jackson, Nipissing; Theresa Leong, Oriole; Seanna Mil-  
lar, Wentworth North; Luke Munro, Halton Centre; Geordon Reid, Muskoka-Georgian Bay; Matthew Routley, Oakville South; Jonathan Sowerby, Etobicoke-Humber; Andrea Sparrey, York East; Ian Standing, Lanark-Renfrew; Arjun Taneja, Eglinton; Cindy Tiqui, Yorkview; Tara Valk, Oshawa; Genevieve Willis, Ottawa East.

Please join me in welcoming our pages.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### TEACHERS' SUPERANNUATION FUND

**Mr. Farnan:** When will this Liberal government redress the injustice done to my former colleagues, fellow teachers whose only sin was that they chose to retire prior to May 31, 1982? Their pensions are calculated on the best seven or 10 years, even though they will have contributed on the same basis as their post-1982 colleagues. Indeed, they will have contributed for many more years than some of their colleagues who have benefited from the open window policy.

Why has the government seen fit to use some \$320 million from the surplus in the teachers' superannuation fund to provide the open window but not to take \$65 million to put all pensions on the same basis? I point out that the \$65 million, now reduced by attrition to some \$50 million, would be taken from the surplus created by those

same teachers and their peers in the government and not from general revenue.

Recalculation to put all teachers on the same basis is not without precedent. When, in 1955, calculation of pensions was changed from the best 15 years to the best 10, all pensions were recalculated, not just those after 1955.

My final point is that the recalculation as suggested has the support not only of the superannuated teachers of Ontario but also of the Ontario Teachers' Federation. It is time for the government to act in the interest of retired teachers.

## NATIONAL SPACE AGENCY

**Mr. Sterling:** I would like to share with the House an open letter to Prime Minister Mulroney which I have drafted. It goes as follows:

"Dear Mr. Prime Minister:

"My sincere congratulations on your successful election campaign which culminated in a majority government for you. I know that this a great personal and political victory for you, and it is well deserved.

"And while your spirits are buoyant at this time, I would ask that consideration once more be given to the Ottawa-Carleton area with respect to the placement of the federal space agency.

"Now, I realize that the electorate of Ottawa-Carleton almost overwhelmingly voted for Liberal candidates, suggesting that they support Liberal leader Turner's suggestion of locating the space agency in Montreal—but nothing could be further from the truth! They want the space agency in Ottawa-Hull at the very least. They simply forgot, when casting their ballots, exactly which party supported their views and which party did not.

"Please keep in mind, Mr. Prime Minister, that Ontario's Premier is also supportive of locating the agency in Ottawa.

"Yes, I know he wasn't exactly helpful to you in the campaign, and he was a bit obstinate over free trade. And yes, I realize he was tardy in his pitch for the space agency, but he did try. I know Premier Bourassa's delegation approached you on at least twice as many occasions, but please do not let that cloud your judgement.

"I hope you give this matter sincere reflection before making your decision."

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

#### LATVIAN INDEPENDENCE DAY

**Mr. Campbell:** [Remarks in Latvian]

With these words of greeting, I was welcomed into a culture and a people different from my own language and heritage. As I grew up, my understanding and love of our multicultural society was enhanced and enriched by my exposure to the culture and language of Latvia.

Seventy years ago last Friday, the flame of liberty and democracy was ignited in Latvia and the other two Baltic states of Estonia and Lithuania, as these peoples threw off the yoke of oppression of imperial Russia. While these independent countries were cruelly crushed and occupied by the armies of Stalin, their peoples, whether languishing under the heel of that tyrant or living in freedom in the west, kept the freedom flame burning fiercely.

Times seem to be changing in the Soviet Union and one can only hope that with glasnost and perestroika the aspirations and dreams of the Baltic nations can be realized. I would ask all members to recognize November 18, 1988, as the 70th anniversary of the proclamation of an independent Latvia.

#### ROSS MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

**Mr. Reville:** The nurses at the Ross Memorial Hospital in Lindsay want to advise this government that patients at their hospital are not receiving adequate care. I have received several letters from the nurses of Local 127 of the Ontario Nurses' Association regarding the situation at the Ross Memorial Hospital, which is facing a deficit of some \$265,000. The nurses say that, as is the case in most hospitals affected by the lack of funding, registered nurses at the Ross have borne almost the total impact of cutbacks. They are facing layoffs and a reduction in nursing hours. When nurses' positions are deleted, both the working nurses and the patients suffer, one from overwork, the other from neglect.

I join with these nurses in urging the Minister of Health (Mrs. Caplan) to protect both nursing jobs and high standards of patient care. These matters go hand in hand and should not be negotiable. To quote the nurses again: "The people of Victoria county face a very real decrease in patient services. We pray that it will

not take a tragedy to illustrate the gravity of the situation."

The Minister of Health should take note.

1340

#### FEDERAL ELECTION

**Mr. Harris:** On behalf of the Ontario Progressive Conservative Party, I want to extend our heartiest congratulations to the Honourable Brian Mulroney and his colleagues on a convincing and well-deserved victory in the general election.

In returning, for the first time this century, consecutive Tory majority governments, the people of Canada have expressed their confidence in the ability of this nation to successfully meet the challenges of global economic change in a manner that will enhance our sovereignty, improve our competitiveness and strengthen our ability to advance our goals of social equity and equality of opportunity.

Above all else, last night's results have vindicated the Prime Minister's bilateral trade policy and the Canada-United States free trade agreement, which will play a key role in securing a more prosperous future for all Canadians.

While the people of this country rejected the vision of Canada's future offered by the Liberal Party and the New Democratic Party, we would be remiss if we did not acknowledge the efforts of the leaders and the candidates of those parties during the campaign. As we all know, politics is a tough business, and the men and women of all parties who made the personal sacrifices required to stand for public office deserve the respect and gratitude of this nation.

We are entering a new era now in our nation's history, a new phase in its development as a mature country. It will be up to the federal PC government to ensure that all Canadians share the benefits of these new opportunities. We are confident that they will be up to that challenge and that this province will join them in it.

#### ANNIVERSARY OF JOHN F. KENNEDY'S ASSASSINATION

**Mr. McGuigan:** I remember John Fitzgerald Kennedy. I remember the promise of his inaugural speech. I remember his Camelot. I remember the time and the place where I heard the awful news that he had been wounded. The day of disbelief was November 22, 1963—a quarter of a century, a generation past.

I remember the time and the place where I learned that he was dead. I remember visiting his gravesite in Arlington National Cemetery. In my



mind's eye I can still see the sad stream of visitors, reminded of the warmth of his life by the hope of the eternal flame. I remember walking the streets of Dallas, Texas, on a warm summer evening in the shadow of the Texas School Book Depository and I remember the memorial marking the site of his assassination.

This day, I and millions of people remember John Fitzgerald Kennedy. I remember and I have not lost hope that out of the ashes of his death a Kennedy-like leader will some day arise to answer the call, in his words, while accepting the 1960 nomination: "My call is to the young in heart, regardless of age; to the stout in spirit, regardless of party; to all who respond to the scriptural call: 'Be strong and have good courage. Be not afraid; neither be thou dismayed.'"

### SMOKE DETECTORS

**Mr. McLean:** My statement is directed to the Solicitor General (Mrs. Smith). Several recent tragic house fires in the Orillia area have resulted in death or serious injuries to the occupants. It has been suggested that deaths and injuries could have been avoided if smoke detectors had been installed. Regulation 67/87 of the Ontario fire code requires that electrical hard-wired smoke alarms be installed in all new single-family dwellings since 1976. Unfortunately, there are no such requirements for single-family-dwelling apartments built before 1976.

I realize that it would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to regulate and enforce the retrofit installation of electric or battery-powered smoke detectors in these older homes and apartments. Therefore, I would urge the Solicitor General to launch a province-wide education campaign to alert the public to the importance of having at least one smoke detector in the residence. Such education programs are carried out to point out and present the hazards that are there.

We have the drinking-and-driving programs and drug abuse programs, and I believe it would be a worthwhile experience for the government to inform the public that smoke detectors can save lives and reduce injuries.

### STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY

#### TRADE WITH UNITED STATES

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** I would like to offer my congratulations to Prime Minister Mulroney on his victory in a hard-fought election campaign. The Canadian people have spoken and I respect

our parliamentary tradition and the mandate given to the Prime Minister.

Even though the rhetoric level in the campaign was sometimes excessive and some sought to pit region against region, I believe it is now incumbent upon all of us to create an atmosphere in which Canadians can work together to face the many challenges that confront us as a nation.

In addition to taking advantage of any opportunities afforded by the trade agreement with the United States, we must now address our attention to providing assistance to those who will lose their jobs as a result of its implementation.

I encourage the federal government to accept as its first priority the introduction of a full and comprehensive program of assistance and adjustment for those whose jobs will be affected as a result of the implementation of this agreement. I also encourage the Prime Minister to place this issue on the agenda for the next round of federal-provincial discussions.

Ontario will continue to act within its jurisdiction to protect Ontarians from the harmful effects of the free trade agreement. We will do so by proceeding with the passage of the Power Corporation Amendment Act, the Water Transfer Control Act and the Independent Health Facilities Act, in order to protect Ontario's constitutional jurisdiction in these areas.

Canada continues to face tremendous challenges with respect to improving its competitiveness in the global marketplace. I look forward to working with the Prime Minister and my fellow premiers in the development of a national strategy for improving Canada's competitiveness.

### NATIONAL COLLEGES WEEK

**Hon. Mrs. McLeod:** This is National Colleges Week. In Ontario, our network of 22 colleges of applied arts and technology provides more than just cause for celebration. In slightly more than two decades, the colleges have earned a distinguished reputation for excellence and adaptability by responding to the needs of the people they serve.

Members may have heard the Humber College jazz ensemble playing in the foyer through the lunch hour. I was pleased to see the students were able to join us to help mark the launch of colleges week. The Humber group represents an estimated 113,000 full-time students in Ontario's college system. These students do not lack for opportunity, challenges or options, as the colleges provide more than 2,000 course offerings.



In addition, you will find college students taking courses in everything from aviation to commercial diving.

Last year, more than 500,000 Ontario residents were enrolled in 740,000 part-time course registrations. To put that in a slightly different context, that means the number of people participating in our college system more than equals the total population of London and Windsor.

In terms of geographic accessibility, the colleges have developed about 100 satellite campuses in 60 centres across the province.

Our colleges are actively working on developing and maintaining links with industry. Through college program advisory committees, representatives from industry have assisted the colleges in creating training programs to upgrade and enhance the skills of thousands of workers.

One example of that co-operation will be celebrated Thursday at George Brown College when the annual fashion awards are presented by industry to students. The recent opening of the wood products centre at Conestoga College in Kitchener is another good example, as is the Canadian Automotive Institute at Georgian College in Barrie. In these instances, industry was a major contributor to the successful opening of the facility. We are committed to maintaining and enhancing the strength of the college system in Ontario. In support of this commitment, we have initiated a review of the college system. This review, called Vision 2000, is now well under way. The study teams are beginning work to determine the needs of the next few decades and the best way to respond.

I am proud of Ontario's colleges and encourage the members of this Legislature to join me in congratulating the students, staff and administrators during colleges week.

1350

#### PRISONER EXCHANGES

#### ÉCHANGES DE PRISONNIERS

**Hon. Mr. Ramsay:** I wish to advise the House that I have entered into an agreement with my counterpart in Quebec, the Honourable Herbert Marx, Solicitor General and the minister responsible for public security in Quebec.

The agreement provides for the exchange of inmates from one jurisdiction to the other without additional costs to the taxpayers of either province.

L'entente permet le transfert de détenus d'une province à l'autre sans coûts supplémentaires pour les contribuables des deux provinces.

Ontario presently maintains similar agreements with Alberta, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and the Northwest Territories. This is the first time Quebec has entered into such an undertaking with another province.

We believe that prisoner exchange agreements have real value as a means of reuniting inmates with their families and home communities as they prepare to return to society. We are particularly pleased to be party to the first such agreement to be established with Quebec.

#### RESPONSES

#### TRADE WITH UNITED STATES

#### COMMERCE AVEC LES ÉTATS-UNIS

**Mr. B. Rae:** I want to begin by welcoming the Premier (Mr. Peterson) back from visiting the undecided voters in Hong Kong and Seoul, Korea, and say how much his intervention in this particular debate—he told us in the last election that there would be no deal. He said, "There will be no deal unless it meets certain conditions." He said, "I have a veto," and he is now exercising it. Then he said, "That is the bottom line."

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. B. Rae:** The only thing this government and this Premier have torn up is the promises they made to the voters of Ontario in the last provincial election.

Obviously, I want to join with the Premier in congratulating the Prime Minister.

Je veux féliciter le premier ministre Mulroney pour sa victoire. Je veux dire en même temps, Monsieur le Président, qu'il y a un contraste très clair entre les déclarations qui ont été faites par le Premier Ministre (M. Peterson) au cours de la dernière élection et le commentaire que nous entendons aujourd'hui.

Je crois que j'ai entendu le son d'un premier ministre qui a laissé tomber le ballon et qui a décidé de ne pas continuer la lutte contre la politique fédérale en ce qui concerne le libre-échange entre le Canada et les États-Unis.

The Attorney General (Mr. Scott) told us last year that it was his considered constitutional judgement that the free trade agreement amounted to a massive intrusion into areas of provincial jurisdiction and an attack on the capacity of all governments to do their job. The response from the Premier today is that there is no more fight, there is no more struggle, there is nothing more that is going to be done and that he not only has dropped the free trade ball, which is precisely what we said he would do for many months, but



has decided that there in fact is nothing more he can do. I am here to tell members that we have long demanded of this government that it take some crucial steps.

When you look at what the government said it was going to do, when you look at the Power Corporation Amendment Act, when I addressed questions to the Minister of Energy (Mr. Wong) he said the government was not going to be proceeding with that bill. They pulled the bill. When we talked about the Water Transfer Control Act, we pointed out to the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Kerrio) that it had nothing to do with stopping the sale of water, that what it had to do with was providing a licence for the sale of water; it was an invitation to a sale of water and not stopping the sale of water. When it comes to the Independent Health Facilities Act, it is equally clear that what that bill does is to ensure that American companies that want to compete in Canada in providing health care services will be allowed and permitted and licensed to do so by the Minister of Health (Mrs. Caplan).

You take those three areas, if those are the three pillars upon which Ontario's opposition now stands, then those pillars have each and every one of them simply foundered and broken and fallen apart. That is what we warned the people of Ontario would happen and that is precisely what has happened.

I think what we have is a collective sigh of relief on the government benches. They have the Tory victory that ironically but so clearly they wanted. They are able to blame a government for the next four years. They are going to be able to blame Ottawa whenever things do not quite go their way. That is exactly what they have. I think we have seen from the behaviour of this government what it has done and what it has not done, where it has campaigned and where it has not campaigned. We can see very precisely just what the real Liberal agenda has been all about since the very beginning.

It is obvious that this government has decided to drop the ball. I can tell members that we have no intention of allowing them to do so.

**Mr. Brandt:** I would like to respond to the statement of the Premier with respect to the election results last night. I join with him in congratulating our Prime Minister on a very fine victory. At the same time, I would like to congratulate all elected members of all political parties, who I hope will work together collectively and positively for the benefit of all Canadians.

Having said that, I really feel that the response of the Premier is inadequate as it relates to the realities of what happened last night in connection with the decision of the people of Canada. They have spoken out in favour of a trade agreement. Of all the provinces in Canada, Ontario is probably the least able at this time to respond positively to what happened last night with respect to taking advantage of the opportunities, and as well I admit, the challenges that will be presented in a free trade agreement.

The Premier knows full well that as of the first of this year there were really two options open to him. We would either proceed with the trade deal, and under that particular scenario Ontario should have been prepared, as other provinces have been, in sending trade missions to the United States, sending trade missions to Europe and pointing out the opportunities that would be available to Ontario—

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** I was just there, Andy.

**Mr. Brandt:** You went to the Pacific Rim countries. You did not go to Europe with a trade mission; you did not go to the United States with any trade missions. As a matter of fact, the Premier of this province took the absolutely unusual step of closing down two trade offices in the United States and turning his back on that market of 250 million potential consumers for Ontario.

I would have to say that the Premier is standing by the side of the road watching the parade go by. The realities of free trade are before us now. I would urge his government to take those steps that are necessary, those steps that are realistic in light of that trade deal and to start moving positively towards a co-operative effort with the federal government, unlike the kind of moves he has been making in the past when he has tried at every single opportunity to stop the deal in its tracks.

The fact of the matter now is that the deal is going ahead.

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Brandt:** Well, I do not agree with my friend in the opposition. I do not agree with what he has said with respect to the actions of this government. The difficulty is that the Premier has done too little of anything on either side of the issue. Now is the time for action.

#### NATIONAL COLLEGES WEEK

**Mr. Jackson:** I would like to join the Minister of Colleges and Universities (Mrs. McLeod) as



well and pay tribute to the staff and the students of Ontario's community colleges. I appreciate very much that the minister paid tribute to the former legislators and to some current legislators who 20 years ago had the vision and foresight to develop the outstanding community college system in this province.

Her statement today should not be looking back at the glory days of community colleges but looking more at the challenges that face our community college system. We have a system with many community colleges in financial difficulty, we are laying off our staff at community colleges, we are turning down students and we are cancelling programs right across this province.

The minister just completed her estimates for this ministry, and some very interesting matters came to light in the course of that inquiry. She was content to blame the federal government, and in fact had very few, if any, positive financial commitments to make to our community colleges. Out of her capital commitment she will underspend her capital commitments in 1988 by \$6 million and in 1989 by approximately \$7 million, and we have overcrowded and inappropriate programs in our community colleges and our universities.

The minister is content merely to make soft statements in support of our community colleges in spite of the very difficult circumstances in which they are attempting to operate. We ask the minister to not just make simple statements of support in this House. We ask her to make firm commitments to give the financial resources necessary to get our community colleges back on firm financial footings right away.

1400

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### TRADE WITH UNITED STATES

**Mr. B. Rae:** I want to come back to the Premier with respect to the free trade agreement. The question that I have for the Premier is simply this: He and his government, I know, have been doing a number of studies, and they have published some of them, with respect to the impact of the free trade agreement on a number of industries and on a number of people. I wonder if the Premier can explain why, in making his announcement today, he did not table what the province's own response will be on behalf of those industries, and most important on behalf of those workers, of those men and women whose lives will now inevitably be affected by the

introduction of this agreement? I wonder if the Premier could explain why he has not done that.

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** I appreciate my honourable friend's question. I would even like to respond to a broader question, if I could, with respect to the competitive strategy of the province of Ontario; the things we have been doing for the last, really three years through the Premier's Council, the things we are doing in science and technology, job training and a variety of other areas, that in fact are preparing this province to be competitive internationally, the broader issue apart from this particular bilateral trade agreement. I will respond to that when I hope my friend the honourable leader of the Progressive Conservative Party asks me this question, because I am not sure where he has been for the last three years.

With respect to my friend opposite, a great number of studies have been published, as he knows, analyses of different industries. We think we have a fairly keen sense of those that are most vulnerable. I am talking about food processing, textiles, appliances, furniture and a number of others. This trade agreement, as my honourable friend knows, we disagree with in this province. The government has not been timid about expressing its own point of view. We respect the fact that the federal government has the right, in areas of its jurisdiction, to contract internationally or make a treaty.

We do think there are going to be job dislocations. I say to the member as candidly as I can that it is the federal government that is responsible for those people who have been laid off or lose their jobs as a result of this trade agreement; just as, if we passed legislation in this province that affected someone else, surely we would have the responsibility. We have been promised generosity by the federal government. We have been promised an adjustment program. We have not seen that. As the member knows, the Prime Minister appointed the de Grandpré commission.

**Mr. B. Rae:** Have you proposed something?

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** Absolutely. We have proposed a great number of ideas to them and we have had absolutely nothing forthcoming. At this moment it is completely in the hands of the federal government. The premiers put forward in a communiqué last summer a call for the de Grandpré commission to come forward with its ideas, to help the workers who will be dislocated.

Why that has not been forthcoming from the federal government, I do not know. As I said in my statement today, I believe that is the number



one item on the public policy agenda in terms of federal, provincial and interprovincial relationships. I think that is where the federal government has to address the concerns, not only of us but of other workers right across this country.

**Mr. B. Rae:** I said in my response to the Premier's statement that what he wanted to do was fed-bash rather than to deal with the problem, and that is precisely what we have seen. If he has a proposal to make with respect to what is going to happen to Ontario workers, why has he not tabled that proposal instead of waiting idly by and preferring to criticize the federal government? Why have we not seen from him what his proposal is with respect to what is going to happen to Ontario workers?

What is his proposal on early retirement? What is his proposal on training? What is his proposal on what is going to happen to women? What is his proposal on what is going to happen to all the industries that he has mentioned? Where are his proposals, coming from the government of Ontario, as to what is going to happen to Ontario workers, and why has he not presented this House and the people of Ontario with that information?

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** With great respect, I am surprised at my honourable friend's lack of familiarity with what has gone on in the last couple of years. His view, I believe, is incorrect in the circumstances. When the federal government is going to pass legislation that is going to hurt workers across this country, here and in other provinces, I tell him it is its responsibility. They have to come forward with programs. Obviously, we will co-operate. But I can tell him this: It is their responsibility, and when they are going to pass an act like this then they are going to have to bear the consequences of that.

**Mr. B. Rae:** This is absurd. You have an impact on education, you have an impact on training, you have an impact on labour relations, you have an impact on apprenticeship, you have an impact on at least 20 areas of provincial jurisdiction where the Premier has a responsibility to act and to respond. You have ministries, you have bureaucrats, you have every single area of government affected; you have people across the province affected and the Premier is saying he would much prefer to wait for Brian Mulroney to do something so that he can just criticize it. That is truly pathetic. That is a pathetic response on behalf of Ontario workers.

Why has the Premier not been prepared to table what it is that he has prepared, the studies that he has made on labour adjustment, on early

retirement, on pensions, on all those questions that fall distinctly and clearly within his jurisdiction? He has to put up or shut up on this one.

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** Maybe I could tell my honourable friend the concerns that we have been discussing with the federal government. I think most of us agree, I think my honourable friend would agree, that in this so-called new world, job training is going to be one of the key elements in assisting workers to make some of the transitions that are necessary.

We have been involved in some very difficult discussions with the federal government, which has substantially cut its skills training expenditure systematically over the last several years. In 1984-85 we were receiving some \$552 million. This year, 1988-89, we will receive \$375 million. There is a cut in real terms of 32 per cent. That is not even counting inflation in that particular calculation.

What we are saying, from our point of view—and the member has seen the caps on apprenticeship; he has seen a number of programs that have been cut—is that these are completely their responsibility and they have to be persuaded of their responsibility to meet these matters.

It is quite easy for the the Leader of the Opposition to stand up, as he does, and say spend, spend, spend in a lot of areas that we did not cause the problems in. I say to him that that is their traditional responsibility; they have to be forthcoming.

#### OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

**Mr. B. Rae:** My question now is to the Minister of Labour. It relates to the questions I raised with him last week about the workers at Libbey Owens Ford. On Thursday, towards the end of the day, the minister announced to the media what was announced by the company, that the workers who had refused to work at that company had in fact been reinstated.

I would now like to tell the minister that on Friday, having reinstated some workers, the company has now proceeded to fire five trade union leaders in that plant, including the president of the local and the head of the union health and safety committee, and it announced that firing on Friday afternoon.

I wonder if the Minister of Labour can tell us just what he is going to do to stop this kind of intimidation and harassment, which has now obviously become part of the business practices of this company.



**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** Just to correct some of the leading remarks of the Leader of the Opposition, what I announced to the press on Thursday is that the six workers whose employment had been terminated because they had become isocyanate-sensitive at Libbey Owens Ford had in fact been reinstated by the company and that they are being given full long-term sickness and disability benefits by the company. My understanding is that the company will maintain that procedure and maintain any employee who becomes sensitive to isocyanates on that basis until the matter has been appropriately adjudicated by the Workers' Compensation Board.

Subsequent to that, five workers, including the head of the union, the president of the local union there, had their employment terminated.

That is a serious issue. It has to be handled in a serious fashion. I want to tell the Leader of the Opposition that those five terminations are now the subject of a grievance being taken by the union on behalf of those workers and they will be dealt with under the grievance procedures under the collective agreement.

1410

**Mr. B. Rae:** I want to ask the minister point-blank: Has he spoken to the plant manager or the president of the company about these firings? And if not, why not?

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** I have not spoken to the plant manager. I have had my officials there for virtually the last two weeks and, indeed, as a result of the firing or the termination of the five workers on Friday Ministry of Labour inspectors will be there, because it is our obligation to investigate any allegation that a worker has suffered a reprisal as a result of raising concerns for the health and safety of workers.

Section 24 of the Occupational Health and Safety Act makes it an offence under the Occupational Health and Safety Act to take measures that can be construed as reprisals. Our ministry inspectors will be investigating that, and if upon completion of those investigations it is determined that reprisals have been taken against workers, appropriate action under the act will be taken.

**Mr. B. Rae:** It is perfectly obvious that the company is playing the minister for a sucker. The only problem is that it is not the minister who has to pay the price for that; it is the workers who are out on the street, who are without a job and without a pay cheque thanks to their having taken some action to try to defend the health and safety of their members. That is the reality.

I want to get back to my point. If the minister felt, as he obviously did, that the first set of firings was inappropriate—because he used that very word in the House—what is stopping the minister from doing what he did with respect to McDonnell Douglas Canada: getting involved himself, calling the people in on both sides and saying: “For God’s sake, stop this nonsense of firing people over health and safety issues. Resolve these questions and get the health and safety improved in the plant to the point where people do not have to refuse work.”

Surely that is the minister’s job in situations of this kind, instead of leaving people out on the street, having to go through the vagaries of a grievance procedure, which, as the minister will know, if the company decides to hardball this one can take a very long time and is going to cause increased tension and stress within that plant.

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** When a matter is the subject of a grievance, the Leader of the Opposition, as a member of provincial parliament, as the head of a political party, as a lawyer and as an individual in this House who probably knows more about labour law than most other members, knows that it would be entirely inappropriate, once an arbitration officer is seized of a matter, for the Minister of Labour or anyone else to intervene in that process. He knows that full well, and this is a serious issue.

The jobs of workers are the subject of a grievance, and for him to suggest that at this point I intervene in an arbitrary fashion is simply inappropriate. He is playing politics with the health and safety of workers at Libbey Owens Ford, not I.

#### TRADE WITH UNITED STATES

**Mr. Brandt:** My question is to the Premier and it is with respect to the decision made by the people of Canada last night, in which they did in fact endorse a free trade agreement with the United States. The Prime Minister has received as well a very clear mandate to proceed with the signing of that agreement and the implementation as of January 1.

The Prime Minister announced that he would recall Parliament on December 12. He will be proceeding with the final stages of that agreement as of that particular time in the House of Commons. I ask the Premier, in light of the fact that he has had consistent opposition to this agreement and in light of the fact that he has attempted in his own way to do everything possible to derail a free trade agreement with the United States, will he now indicate to the people



of Ontario that he is prepared to co-operate with the federal government, set aside the rhetoric that has taken place in this campaign and all of those negative things that have occurred, and work co-operatively with the federal government to take advantage of the opportunities that are presented in this trade agreement?

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** Let me say that it never ceases to amaze me the different perceptions from the members opposite with respect to the government roles; and as for the member for Sarnia and the leader of Her Majesty's official opposition, I just wonder some days if they are both seeing the same things.

That being said, my honourable friend has asked a serious question, and I want to respond in a serious way. I respect the analysis my honourable friend makes, that the Prime Minister has a clear parliamentary mandate. Some may get into the discussion that, because of the fact that there was not over 50 per cent of the vote and because the combined opposition parties had a higher popular vote, it was not a clear mandate; but I accept in our system, as my honourable friend does, that with a parliamentary majority, when that was the dominant issue—and we will never know if it was the sole and exclusive issue—then very clearly the government has the right to proceed in this matter.

It is no secret, my honourable friend knows, that we disagreed fundamentally, and I think that history will say that it is regrettable we even got into these discussions. That being said, I have to accept the inevitable, and in life one has to play the hand that one is dealt. Obviously, this government has been preparing itself in the last two or three years with the Premier's Council, with budgetary initiatives, things we are doing in trade. And I am delighted that my honourable friend believes I should travel more, even though I miss him terribly when I do travel. I want to say that I appreciate his advice in that regard and would even invite him to join us.

We are pushing out our parameters of trade, and that includes the United States but other parts of the world as well. We are doing things in research and technology and development today that are leading this country and, indeed, leading internationally. So we have been preparing ourselves as a competitive province, and I accept the things that my honourable friend says. We are not in a position, because the power rests with the federal government, to implement this deal, and the member and I both understand that constitutionally.

There are certain other responsibilities that we have with respect to jurisdiction over things traditionally our responsibility, and we will exercise that. We have to do whatever we can to assist the people who are hurt by the implementation of this deal. What I hope to see as quickly as possible—and we are not going out of our way to subvert anything; our opposition has been clear and there for everyone to see—but I say to my honourable friend that the federal government now, because it has promised, has a very clear responsibility to come forward with an adjustment program for all the people of Canada who are going to be dislocated as a result of this deal.

I do not believe in mindless fighting. I am not like some who would bicker for the sake of bickering; I accept the inevitable. But, on the other hand, the federal government has to fill in—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. That seems like a fairly complete answer.

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** You have to play with the cards that are dealt.

**Mr. Brandt:** I am terribly disturbed to hear that the Premier is lonesome when I am not around him, and on his next trip I will send him a picture or something that he can carry with him.

I would like to remind the Premier that even without a free trade agreement, he knows full well that, with world economic realities, with the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and with competition from Third World countries, there were going to be some very fundamental changes in the Ontario economy, some very wrenching adjustments that were going to have to be made; and surely in a nonpartisan way, if members will hear me out, the Premier would agree that Ontario would have to adjust to those new realities. I say that irrespective of free trade, but I also would point out to the Premier that there are tremendous opportunities that will be available to this province if we move co-operatively with the federal government. I am rather astounded to hear the Premier indicate to the leader of the New Democratic Party that this is almost singularly or solely some kind of federal responsibility.

**Mr. Speaker:** Does the member have a question? Order.

**Mr. Brandt:** I ask the Premier, in light of the hand of co-operation extended by his federal leader, who indicated that he was prepared to co-operate with respect to the implementation, is the Premier prepared to make the same commitment on behalf of the 9.5 million people of Ontario?



**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** I appreciate my honourable friend now, the day after the election, standing up and talking about the gut-wrenching adjustments that will go on in this province. You know, the next time I travel, and I do miss my honourable friend—

Interjections.

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** My honourable friend is now starting to apologize in advance for the problems that are going to go on and trying to extricate—

Interjections.

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** You can see, Mr. Speaker, what is happening here from both parties opposite in this House. Our position has been clear and will continue to be so. But when we see the trends that have gone out from the federal government in the last two or three years—and I say to my honourable friend, were he still a minister of the crown on this side of the House and he looked at the federal contribution to job training and the trends that have gone on, he would be disturbingly worried about this situation, as are we. What we have to see is a major commitment from the federal government to prepare this country for that so-called brave new world that it has steered us into.

1420

If the member wants to stand in this House and every time there is a plant closing in this province say it was going to happen anyway or it is because of Third World competition, he can do so if he feels his job is to defend that. However, I say to the member that there is going to be a lot of dislocation as a straight function of this agreement, and it is the federal government's responsibility. I say that as kindly as I can.

I say at the same time that we will work with the federal government and we will co-ordinate our programs. But there is a serious financial responsibility here, and the financial responsibility is a federal one.

**Mr. Brandt:** I made it very clear in my earlier comments that without free trade there would be adjustments, there would be changes, there would be a future course of action that the Premier has an obligation to set in place here in this province to prepare for the inevitable changes that we all know are coming, with or without free trade.

I would like to say that the contribution of the federal government with respect to the economy of Ontario has been to reduce deficits in this country, to reduce unemployment rates, to reduce interest rates and to put the economy back

on track again. That is what they have done. The Premier has not done that, and I want him to know—

**Mr. Speaker:** Question?

**Mr. Brandt:** —that the provincial government, by way of question—

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. If I can have your attention, I would like to hear the question, the final supplementary.

**Mr. Brandt:** My final supplementary is that, in light of the fact that Quebec, Alberta, eight out of 10 provinces have indicated their support for this deal and eight out of 10 provinces are aggressively at this moment pursuing what they see as the opportunities available under this deal, can the Premier give us some indication of what Ontario is doing?

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** I must say this is probably the strangest day that I have enjoyed in this House in the last 15 years, listening to the arguments of the members opposite.

**Mr. Brandt:** You looked as if you were enjoying last night. You were really happy last night.

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** I was thinking of you last night, Mr. Speaker, and the joy that I would have today in this House.

I say to my honourable friend that Ontario has been preparing for the brave new world for the last three years. Look at the things that we are doing in research and technology and development, the assistance through the centres of excellence and a variety of other programs. It is our belief, and I share this with my honourable friend, that we have to be an economic leader through technological innovation. One of the deficiencies of the trade agreement is that it would just reinforce us as a storehouse of raw materials. We should have been using the raw materials for the benefit of a higher intellectual value added economy. We have gone through all of this argument. It was lost on some, and others agreed. Again, I accept the results.

I say to my honourable friend that it is not as if this province has had its head in the sand in this regard. As a matter of fact, I think we have been leaders, and of course we will co-operate. The member cannot ask me to change my mind about the worth of this particular agreement. If there are any advantages, presumably we will try to take advantage of the situation. But we have been pushing at our markets in Europe, in Asia and in a variety of other places. I say to my friend that I think we are well prepared.



If the member just wants me to stand up and recant and say that I was wrong, and I guess that is what my honourable friend wants me to do, he cannot reasonably expect that, any more than I would expect him, at his most outrageous, to stand up and admit he was wrong.

**Mr. Speaker:** New question.

**Mr. Brandt:** I am going to say to the Premier that the only—

**Mr. Speaker:** Is your new question to the Premier?

**Mr. Brandt:** Yes, it is, as a matter of fact. I have a further question of the Premier, and it relates to the fact that there were really two options that the Premier had to prepare for. I recognize the realities of elections, as he does. It could have gone either way. If that election had gone another way, we would not have a free trade agreement that would be coming into place as of January 1.

Now, on January 1, there will be some specific things happening. The Premier has put three bills before this House that we believe are not probably as crucial or as necessary as other actions this government could have taken relative to the free trade agreement.

The second option the Premier had available and that he should have prepared for was obviously the reality that a trade agreement would be put in place, and at that time there are certain items that are going to be removed from the standpoint of tariffs. There will be tariff removals on some 15 per cent of all goods that move between Canada and the United States. On our side, it will include items such as computers, leather, fur, fur garments, ferro alloys and some pork products in the agricultural field.

The Premier knows that the removal of these tariffs will have an effect on those industries, no question, and they could benefit very directly the people of this province. What legislation, what programs does the Premier have in place as a result of the inevitable removal of those tariffs on January 1?

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** I am just missing my friend the free market man's intention here. He is suggesting that we should have a provincial tariff on computers? What is he suggesting? That we need a piece of legislation to protect our computer industry or our software industry? I am not sure what my honourable friend—

**Mr. Brandt:** Is he prepared for the change?

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** We have prepared massively. We have talked to all of the companies, and I think we have a fairly strong sense of

the situation. As a matter of fact, we have been preparing.

Let me tell the member the kind of dilemma we have. I just got a note that last spring the Minister of Labour (Mr. Sorbara) came in with a list of adjustment programs for the standing committee on finance and economic affairs looking at all options, and the New Democratic Party responded in anger. I am told that the member for Hamilton East (Mr. Mackenzie) claimed that even to prepare such a scheme in advance was to admit that the free trade agreement was going through.

That is the difficulty we have in this group. In this House today we have two dramatically different points of view: Those people do not want us to prepare; these people do.

I think the member will find that this province is prepared to take advantage of the opportunities of the world as well as or better than any other province. If he does not believe me, he should look at the economic record of this province. We are the highest-growth economy in the industrialized world today. So I appeal to my honourable friend, we are dealing from strength.

**Mr. Brandt:** The Premier inherited a pretty good operating government at the time in 1985—

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Brandt:** My supplementary is to the Premier, if I can get above the yahoos here.

**Mr. Speaker:** I would like to hear it, if the members would allow that.

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Brandt:** Very simply, other provinces have already taken some very strategic steps relative to opportunities under this agreement. They recognize that there are going to be changes. The Premier's government, on the other hand, of only two provincial governments in all of Canada, has not really taken any positive steps to prepare for free trade or to increase the amount of trade that Ontario is doing with our major trading partner.

I ask the Premier again, what programs has he put in place specifically to assist in taking advantage of those many opportunities that we in our party and the people of Canada have now stated? Those opportunities will be in place, and he should be doing something about them. What is he doing? It is a very simple question.

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** I am glad my honourable friend has elevated this discussion into a question of what we inherited on this side of the House.



We inherited a deficit of \$2.6 billion. We inherited some Suncor stock that my friend's government paid \$650 million for, and I will make him a deal on it right now if he wants to buy it. We inherited Minaki Lodge. We inherited the Urban Transportation Development Corp. and a whole raft of other liabilities. That is what we inherited from the previous government.

What we have achieved in the last three years—and I say it because my honourable friend forces me to be somewhat immodest about this, because I know he would like to take credit for every good thing in this economy that this government does but still blame the problems on us; and I understand the nature of opposition—but I say to my honourable friend again that we enjoy one of the largest trading relationships in the history of the world with the United States. That trade will continue and is expanding annually.

Obviously, this discussion was about whether this particular trade agreement would assist or not assist Canadians in that regard. We know the various points of view on that.

I say to my honourable friend that when we have the highest-growth economy in the industrialized world, when we are making investments in intellectual capital and in research and development, when you look at our capital spending and investment projections, we are better positioned than any other province in this country. I say that with some pride.

1430

**Mr. Brandt:** Let me say with some pride to the Premier, by way of question, that when he inherited that government in 1985, he inherited the strongest economy of any province in the entire country. He inherited the lowest unemployment rate. He inherited the leading industrial province in the entire country in terms of output, in terms of our exports. He inherited a very well operating province, as he well knows.

**Mr. Speaker:** The supplementary.

**Mr. Brandt:** It is our intention—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Brandt:** —by way of question, Mr. Speaker—

**Mr. Speaker:** There seems to be—

**Mr. Brandt:** —to keep our province operating in the fashion in which the people of Ontario have expected in the past. We want to see that growth continue. We want to see that prosperity continue. The co-operation that we need between Ontario and the federal government is paramount. Is the Premier prepared to work co-operatively with the federal government and to

take the initiatives provincially that are available to him to enhance Ontario's trading position with the United States?

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** I ask for your sympathy, Mr. Speaker. Look at the enormous dilemma I am in. My honourable friend opposite, as a former minister of the crown, stands and says that we have inherited the finest economy in Canada and he is right. Now he is saying that, as a result of the free trade agreement, it is going to fall apart. This was supposed to be the great salvation of this province and this—

**Mr. Brandt:** I did not say that at all.

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** That is what the member is saying. My honourable friend cannot have it both ways. My honourable friend, finally, after a year of debate, is coming around to my point of view, that this is not the great salvation of this country. I am glad to see him see the light on this matter, even though it is late. As the Liberal Party, we believe in redemption. We believe that anybody can be salvaged and we welcome conversions, even if they are later in life. I welcome my honourable friend to my point of view on this matter.

#### ACCIDENT COMPENSATION

**Mr. B. Rae:** I have a question for the Attorney General. Patrick Rothwell is a nine-year-old boy who is blind and severely brain-damaged. His parents took a case against Connaught Laboratories Ltd. and the Ontario government was named in the lawsuit. It was their view that a vaccination that he had had caused him to be severely brain-damaged. He is not expected to live past the age of 30. In the course of the evidence presented at trial, his parents established that it would cost them about \$1.5 million to care for Patrick.

Mr. Justice Osler, in his decision dismissing the case, called on the government of Ontario to introduce a no-fault insurance plan to help Patrick and his parents and many other kids and parents who are in this tragic situation. I wonder if the Attorney General can tell us what the government of Ontario plans to do to help Patrick and his parents.

**Hon. Mr. Scott:** I am grateful to the member for the question. As he recognizes in this very tragic case, that was tried by, I am sure he will agree, one of the most distinguished judges in the country and one of the most compassionate judges, the judge concluded that it could not be established on the balance of probabilities that the laboratory or the manufacturers of the



vaccine were responsible for the injuries that occurred. That is a tragic result.

The suggestion that the trial judge made, to which the honourable member refers, has been made before. The Ontario Law Reform Commission has made a report on the subject, as has Mr. Justice Osborne. The questions that are presented for solution in those two reports are before the government, and when a recommendation is made to the Legislature on this subject the honourable member will be the first to know.

**Mr. B. Rae:** I suspect I will be, but I just want to say that we understand that the company involved, Connaught Laboratories, has confirmed that it is surcharging the Ministry of Health some \$3 on each dose and has collected nearly \$12 million in order to meet any potential cost of the lawsuit if that lawsuit were to be effective.

The Attorney General will recall the case of the so-called Brampton case where the kid was driving his motorcycle and that case eventually was not successful. He will know that there are many, many other people, thousands of individuals who are not compensated for injuries in accidents that take place outside the workplace and outside the purview of a successful private lawsuit, who receive no compensation for their accident. They live on welfare and live marginal lives, in many cases, in nursing homes and hospitals for the rest of their lives and their families receive no compensation whatsoever.

I wonder if the Attorney General can tell us just how urgent is this problem for him. Is it something which we can genuinely expect to have some legislation on?

**Hon. Mr. Scott:** I agree with the honourable member that it is a serious problem but, as he knows, traditionally we have not in this province or indeed in this country compensated people who are in the courtroom, people who are injured without negligence on the part of anybody.

In the Brampton case to which he referred, the young man was very severely injured as a result of an accident that was nobody's fault. If it nobody's fault, it is not the policy of the courts to make somebody pay. In the Connaught case, the vaccine, which has been taken by thousands, was not shown to have been manufactured or dispensed negligently and, as a result, it was nobody's fault that this accident occurred.

What the honourable member is saying is that there should be some way of compensating persons who are injured without fault. I understand the point and, of course, he will understand that we have gone very far in this Legislature to

provide a full medical system, a full support system for those in the community who are disadvantaged either by accidents of this type or by accidents of birth or placement in the economy.

I understand that the honourable member may feel from time to time that we have not gone far enough and I often agree with him, but it is a problem that the taxpayers will have to address. We will have to begin as taxpayers in the province to discuss with each other the extent to which we are prepared to provide compensation for pain and suffering in these very difficult cases.

### INNOVATION CENTRES

**Mr. Jackson:** I have a question to the Premier regarding his government's innovation centres. These centres, as the Premier knows, are operating out of the 22 community colleges in Ontario. They are there to aid and develop the entrepreneurial initiatives in our citizens and to help budding investors and small businessmen. These centres have created new technologies, new opportunities and fresh employment for this province. They have been translated into real success stories.

There has been a written review commissioned by the Premier's government of these innovation centres and that report has now been completed. He just said that his government has not been sticking its head in the sand or dragging its feet on the issue of preparing our economy for the future, but that report has been sitting on his minister's desk since last December. Will the Premier please advise the members of this House why he has sat on a report on the future of the innovation centres for Ontario for a full year and why he still has not clarified whether their status is such that they will continue?

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** I think the honourable minister could help the gentleman out.

**Mr. Speaker:** Referred to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology.

**Hon. Mr. Kwinter:** Members will know that there was a sunset review built into the innovation centres. We have been looking at them; we have received the report. That report has gone through the cabinet process and an announcement will be made on that very shortly.

**Mr. Jackson:** In estimates two weeks ago, we asked the Minister of Colleges and Universities (Mrs. McLeod) about the status of this report. She was unaware that the report had even been



completed, let alone sitting dormant on the minister's desk for a year. We have been advised that after one year of this report sitting on his desk, community colleges have been advised not to accept any more clients for this program and that they are to prepare immediately to phase out this program by the end of this year. It appears the Premier has made a decision, whether or not it has gone to cabinet or whether or not he had the courtesy to tell the minister involved.

Last night Canadians sent a clear and strong message that they are prepared to compete and to compete with the very best in the world. Why does the minister not act now and clarify the point that our innovation centres are worthy of support, that they are successful and that he and his government, with the mandate it has been entrusted with, will keep Ontario strong and keep it competitive. Clarify and announce that those centres can stay open.

**1440**

**Hon. Mr. Kwinter:** If the member had been following the reports of the Premier's Council, he would know we do not have to apologize for where we are in the way of research and development. I am sure he knows that when it comes to the dedication of gross domestic product, Ontario has 1.7 compared to 1.3 across the country. The innovation programs have been in effect for three years. We have other programs in place and we are looking at them. We are going to be making an announcement shortly which will address the needs and concerns of this province.

#### CONTROL OF SMOKING

**Mr. Owen:** I have a question for the Chairman of Management Board. It deals with the registry office for the country of Simcoe, which is located at Barrie. As the minister is aware, I have received many complaints about smoking in the registry office. I know the government has tried to locate smoking in one area of the building. We all know it is not working and it cannot work. The building is old and there is just no way it can manage. These people are suffering in health because of their working conditions. When can we expect some help for the people who are working in this place?

**Hon. Mr. Elston:** I want to thank the member for his question. We have considered the workplace of the Ontario public service as one of those areas in which we hope to upgrade the working conditions. One of the top concerns we have as a government is, of course, dealing with the issue of smoking. There have been in fact a

couple of ministries other than mine which have proceeded to deal with the issue on their own, but we are looking at a corporate policy in considering what opportunities may exist for us in helping to solve the problem the member has brought to our attention here in the House today. I expect, in due course, that we will have some initiatives we can consider with respect to smoking policy in the public service.

**Mr. Owen:** Not only have I received complaints from the people working in this building but also I have received letters from doctors saying there are title searchers working there for whom this is their only livelihood; there are single mothers working there. They have been told by their doctors that they are going to have to leave their jobs unless some help can be given to them.

Can we either have a ban on smoking in this particular workplace or is there going to be some program to provide some benefits for the people who are forced to leave their employment and livelihood?

**Hon. Mr. Elston:** The request by the honourable gentleman for benefits for those people who are working outside the Ontario public service is not within my mandate in terms of what I do in the government of Ontario.

**Mr. Sterling:** It talks about your premises. This talks about the registry office.

**Hon. Mr. Elston:** If the member for Carleton (Mr. Sterling) would listen to the question, it talked about people who are not employed in the public service. If he would listen instead of talking, he might understand that my jurisdiction does not apply to providing benefits to those people who do not work within the public service.

**Mr. Sterling:** Your colleague behind you does. Why don't you make a policy, we would like to see some policy.

**Hon. Mr. Elston:** I am trying to answer the question, by indicating that we are quite concerned that the quality of the workplace for the members of the public service of this province be such that they can provide effective, timely and efficient service to the public of Ontario. We are quite prepared to consider any options with respect to a smoking policy within the public service, including bans and all kinds of things about which the honourable member brought us up to date. At this point, however, we are not making an announcement with respect to that type of policy.



I am quite aware of the concerns which the member for Simcoe Centre (Mr. Owen) has brought to me on an ongoing basis. In fact, I am very pleased he has supplied to me the material he has talked about in bringing to my attention the need for a timely response by the government.

#### RENTAL HOUSING PROTECTION

**Mr. Breaugh:** I have a question for the Minister of Housing concerning an apartment building at 1749 Victoria Park Avenue in Scarborough owned by a company known as Canadian Opportunities Investments Ltd.

Is the minister aware that this company has made a mockery of her Rental Housing Protection Act, that it has regularly done extensive renovations, dislocating the tenants? They have in fact forced microwave ovens upon people, even when they had their own microwave ovens. They have run renovation costs up to about \$1.7 million and they are now expecting a 65 per cent increase in rent. Is it the minister's intention to allow that to happen?

**Hon. Ms. Hošek:** We are aggressively pursuing all violations of the Rental Housing Protection Act. I am grateful to the member for listing this one for me. If anyone else has any others that he considers to be violations of the act, we are glad to hear them.

I should tell the member that just recently in one of the cases that was brought forward there was a fine of about \$5,000 against an owner who did indeed contravene the Rental Housing Protection Act. I think that is a very good indication of the kind of force the act has, and I am asking anyone else who has any examples that he thinks contravene RHPA to please bring them forward, because we are prepared to pursue them.

**Mr. Breaugh:** The minister will know, because on September 7 Scott Smith, representing the tenants association there, wrote to her outlining all of these details, the fact that there was a request for a 65 per cent rent increase and that many of the tenants are elderly or on fixed incomes and they will be forced to move elsewhere. He asked the minister the question, "Where are they to go?" In two months, there has been no reply from the minister's office. Would the minister care to reply to him this afternoon?

**Hon. Ms. Hošek:** We know that the Rental Housing Protection Act is meant to protect tenants from any changes made to their buildings, and I am prepared to deal with that. As to the question of rental increases, there will be no

unjustified rent increases. Just because there has been an application does not mean that the result of the application will be as requested by the landlord.

#### APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING

**Mrs. Cunningham:** My question is for the Premier. The Premier's Council on technology warns us today that Ontario's competitive position in several industries has eroded. It has eroded because we are not committed to investing in a competitive, skilled workforce. It also advises us that Sweden is committed, Japan is committed and so is Germany.

The Premier's own Ministry of Skills Development has cut its budget by some \$40 million on adult and apprenticeship training programs. Is this his real, serious commitment to job training?

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** I think the minister can answer the honourable member.

**Hon. Mr. Curling:** As the Premier indicated in the first question here about the commitment to training in Ontario, the provincial government has increased its funding in training and the federal government has cut back its training.

There is an indication, as the Premier stated, that in 1984 the Canadian Jobs Strategy was putting forward to Ontario a total of about \$552 million. It eroded as it went along so that, for 1989, it was reduced to about \$374 million. It shows a commitment on the part of the province, a moving forward, while on the federal level there is a cutback.

**Mrs. Cunningham:** In 1986-87, the ministry spent \$141.9 million; in 1987-88, it spent \$125.6 million, and this year the plan is to spend \$101.6 million. I think what we are talking about here is Ontario's commitment. We can all sit around and talk about Canada's commitment, but we are interested here, all of us, no matter what party we represent, in representing the young people and the adults who want to be part of this competitive workforce.

The Premier today talked about job training as being a key element. I am using his words and I agree with him. If it is that important, my question is this: Why do we need a Ministry of Skills Development if we are not committed to training a workforce to be competitive, as the Premier stated, in this global world?

**Hon. Mr. Curling:** We need a ministry committed to training because when we saw the illiteracy rate and the kind of skills that people had in Ontario, 24 per cent of adults were functionally illiterate. We also found that in the



apprenticeship program there was no training strategy in place.

In 1986, this government put in place Ontario's Training Strategy of five components, committed to training. We had hoped for the commitment of the federal government to put its money there in order to train this workforce. Ontario has done its part. We have training consulting services. We have an Ontario Skills office; we have a consultant going out and encouraging the private sector to do training.

1450

I would ask that my critic would instil upon the mandate that we see in the federal government today, and moving forward as it says in the free trade agreement, to commit in that resources of people, to put money there to train them, and then I am sure we will have a resource to compete with the world.

#### AFFORDABLE HOUSING

**Mr. Adams:** My question is for the Minister of Housing. In the government's Housing First policy and in the creative housing agreement signed by the province and the city of Peterborough, there is a real thrust towards the use of surplus government lands for affordable housing. Of course, governments are not the only holders of large tracts of unused land.

My question to the minister is this: Does the government intend to apply pressure to other holders of unused land, such as railway companies, to sell suitable portions of those lands at reasonable cost and so provide affordable housing?

**Hon. Ms. Hošek:** We have tried to enter into agreements and we have in fact succeeded with some municipal governments in taking this approach of having them use their land for the purposes of meeting affordable housing needs, having led the way ourselves with Housing First and with our policy, in which what we are doing is saying that all land that is surplus to our needs and that is appropriate for housing will indeed be used to meet our affordable housing goals.

There is of course another level of government—I do not want to let that one go—that owns enormous tracts of land all over the province, and in fact in some of the areas in which the need is greatest, and that is the federal government. I have invited the previous Minister of State (Housing) of the federal government to make sure that the federal resources of land are brought forward to be used for these purposes. I will of course be asking the next minister of housing, whoever he or she may be, for the same

thing. I think that there are enormous resources within governments that I think need to be brought forward.

As to the member's question about the private sector, I think that our land use policy in a way addresses that by saying that in all major development that is going on, as municipalities plan for the future, we are expecting that one quarter of the units that are built in the development process from now on will indeed be there for people who need it for affordable housing help.

**Mr. Adams:** In the general case of these large tracts of unused land, does the minister think she will be able to develop safeguards so that they are sold in such a way as to prevent speculation and the taking of large profits before development occurs?

**Hon. Ms. Hošek:** I think the most important thing for us is that when housing gets built, it meets the needs of the community, and in particular that the needs of people of low and moderate income are met more adequately than they have been so far. I believe that with our requirement that municipalities plan for those needs from now on, that will have an impact on the development process throughout the province, no matter where the land comes from. Those needs must be met, and they must be met with an overall plan in each municipality.

As the member knows, in the agreement that was signed between the province and the city of Peterborough, which the member was involved with, there is clearly a set of goals that needs to be met. I think that the setting of goals in the development process will mean that the land will in fact be more adequately used for the people who need help.

#### CORONER'S INQUEST

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** I have a question to the Solicitor General concerning, again, the coroner's inquest into the Bastien death. I would like to ask the minister if she is aware that a couple of weeks ago, the coroner made an accusation that Mr. Bastien was impaired when this incident took place, which subsequently was not supported by evidence presented to the inquest.

After that, the lawyer representing the family made a request that the Ontario Provincial Police appear before the inquest in the uniforms and in the camouflage uniforms that they wore that night so that the jury could view them. That was rejected, and then last week, it is now alleged, the coroner, during lunch, talked to members of the coroner's jury and indicated that the lawyer



representing the family is simply grandstanding and dragging out this inquest. As a result of those comments the inquest has now been suspended and the lawyer for the family is going to Divisional Court to have the coroner removed from this case.

Does the minister not understand that our community and the family do not have confidence in this process, do not have confidence that we are going to get to the facts and deal with the public policy question of these tactical rescue units? Is the minister prepared today to indicate that there will be a public inquiry into this matter very soon?

**Hon. Mrs. Smith:** As I indicated before, the coroner's inquest at this moment continues and is a public inquiry of a particular type. I will be reviewing the most recent events which did occur at that inquiry yesterday, I believe, and will be glad to keep the member informed on this. In the meantime, as I have said before, I will not make decisions on any further action resulting from this inquiry in the form of the coroner's inquest.

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** I think that the minister is taking advice from her bureaucrats within her ministry rather than acting with her own instincts and in the interest of the people of this province when it comes to this tragedy that occurred down our way. I will ask the minister again. I know what is going on in this inquest, I have talked to people who are involved in it and I have been reading the press clippings; there have been front page stories for five weeks in our paper. The confidence in the police system in our province has been shaken by this case and it is her responsibility to put back confidence, and the only way that is going to happen is with a public inquiry. I am asking the minister today to take the first step to restoring that confidence by indicating that there will be a public inquiry into this matter and the broader public policy questions.

**Hon. Mrs. Smith:** The coroner's inquest is part of a process by which certain events are being examined. The member will be interested to know I have received no advice although I have been following this very closely. It is my intention to await the advice that I am anxious to receive, which is the advice from the coroner's inquest jury.

#### AMBULANCE SERVICES

**Mr. Eves:** I have a question for the Minister of Health. This morning I spoke to her office about a critically ill patient at Oakville-Trafalgar Memorial Hospital who had a broken back and was aspirated, which means that he cannot

breathe on his own. If this man is to survive he needs immediate surgery by a specialist at Toronto General Hospital. For almost 24 hours his doctor was trying to get him transferred to Toronto General but, because of the Halton-Peel ambulance drivers' strike, no ambulance was available. This was very much a life-and-death situation. The patient's doctor was finally successful in his nonstop efforts of almost 24 hours, just before the noon hour today when an ambulance from Toronto arrived in Oakville to transfer this critically ill patient.

Last week in the Legislature the minister indicated that no one's life had been put at risk because of the ambulance strike. How can the minister say that no one's life is at risk as a result of the Halton-Peel ambulance strike when there are instances like this individual—who was only lucky. His doctor indicated to me on the phone this morning that next time we may not be so lucky. Will the minister not now revise her thinking and take a part and step into this strike before somebody's life is lost as a result of it.?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** I am aware of this particular situation and, in fact, the workings of our health care system rely on people who do go that extra mile to help those who are in need of critical and urgent care and I would like to acknowledge the physician in this case who did persevere to make sure that this patient received the care that he needed. I have asked the ministry to review this specific case. I understand that he was transferred this morning.

**Mr. Eves:** The physician in question was extremely frustrated. When he talked to the dispatcher and to his supervisor he was told that he could not be told how many ambulances were available; that was confidential information. At one instance he was told that the orthopaedic surgeon at TGH had cancelled the ambulance and that was proven not to be the case at about 7 p.m. yesterday. Does the minister not really think that she should exercise some responsibility as a minister—I know that she was reluctant to go into this strike initially, but it has lasted over a hundred days, and my colleagues from Burlington South (Mr. Jackson) and Mississauga South (Mrs. Marland) have raised specific instances over the last couple of months in this Legislature. Does she not feel that now is time for her, as minister, to act and enter into a mediation or arbitration process with respect to this strike?

1500

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** As I have said before in this House, the negotiation of what is a labour dispute is between the Halton and Mississauga

district ambulance service provider and their employees. The situation is being monitored by the ministry. Where we have any information about specific cases, I am pleased to look into those because I want to ensure that emergency services are being maintained.

I want to assure the member that a contingency plan is in effect and that there has been assistance provided from surrounding area ambulance services to assist in this situation.

I believe it is important for us to have an opportunity to review this specific case, but I have been assured that, in fact, emergency services are being maintained and that there is no risk to the public.

### PETITIONS

#### RETAIL STORE HOURS

**Mr. Dietsch:** I have a petition which reads as follows:

"To the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"Whereas we strongly oppose the intention of Bill 113 for Sunday opening, we believe that the Ontario government must act to maintain Sunday as a common pause day."

It is signed by a number of employees who work for St. Catharines Volkswagen, and I have affixed my name thereto.

#### CHURCH OF SCIENTOLOGY

**Mr. B. Rae:** I thought I had a petition here. I do.

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"Whereas the crown in the province of Ontario continues a lengthy, futile and expensive prosecution against the Church of Scientology; and

"Whereas at no time in recorded history has an entire church been charged with a criminal offence for the actions of individuals, and freedom of religion in the province is at risk; and

"Whereas the alleged offences occurred over a decade ago, and those responsible have been expelled from the church or rehabilitated,

"We petition the Attorney General and the government of Ontario to withdraw the charges against the church and end this prosecution."

This petition I will sign, as I am obliged to do in order to allow the petition to be entered into the record, and for no other reason.

### SCHOOL OPENING EXERCISES

**Mr. Reyecraft:** I have a petition addressed:

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor of the province of Ontario:

"We, the members and adherents of the Glencoe and Appin congregations of the United Church of Canada wish to express to the Minister of Education of the province of Ontario our deep concern at the banning of religious exercises at the opening of the school day from our public schools. We believe this action by the Supreme Court shows disrespect for our Christian heritage and for the rights of the majority of our citizens who belong to the Christian faith. We find it particularly inconsistent at a time when the government of Ontario is funding a school system committed to the Catholic faith. We hope that it may be possible to work toward a reversal of this decision with appropriate legal action, if need be, to appeal the Supreme Court decision."

The petition is signed by some 157 individuals, and I have attached my signature to it.

### MOTION

#### PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

Hon. Mr. Conway moved that Mr. Keyes and Mr. Epp exchange places in the order of precedence for private members' public business.

Motion agreed to.

### INTRODUCTION OF BILL

#### ANIMALS FOR RESEARCH AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Wildman moved Bill 190, An Act to amend the Animals for Research Act.

Motion agreed to.

**Mr. Wildman:** The purpose of the bill is to prohibit the use of animals in nonmedical experimentation, including the Draize eye irritation test and the classic LD<sub>50</sub> acute toxicity test and similar tests.

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### ESTIMATES

Hon. Mr. Conway moved resolution 18:

That the estimates of the Office of the Assembly and of the office of the chief election officer be considered in the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly for three hours each, the estimates of the Office of the Ombudsman be considered in the standing committee on the Ombudsman for three hours and the estimates of the Office of the Provincial Auditor be



considered in the standing committee on public accounts for three hours; and that, notwithstanding any previous order of the House, the estimates of the Management Board of Cabinet be considered in the committee of supply for four hours, the estimates of the Ministry of Government Services be considered in the committee of supply for two hours, the estimates of the Ministry of Treasury and Economics be transferred from the committee of supply to the standing committee on finance and economic affairs, and the estimates of the Ministry of Housing be considered in the committee of supply for 13 hours.

Motion agreed to.

House in committee of supply.

#### ESTIMATES, MINISTRY OF HEALTH (continued)

**Mr. Chairman:** I was wondering if the member for Riverdale had completed his presentation, which he had started earlier?

**Mr. Reville:** I would be happy to continue on, but it would be nice perhaps if my colleagues had a turn. So why do I not relinquish the floor for the time being?

**Mr. Chairman:** Would the minister wish to respond before we proceed?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** I did not realize you were ready, Mr. Chairman.

**Mr. Chairman:** The member for Riverdale has agreed to proceed to the next speaker. Did you wish to respond before that?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** Yes, Mr. Chairman. Both of the opposition critics have had an opportunity to begin their opening remarks. I felt that today I would like to begin by responding to one issue which was raised and which I hope, following my remarks today, we might be able to set aside as far as discussion is concerned and perhaps have the kind of unanimous consent which was present in the federal Legislature with the passing of the Canada Health Act in 1984.

There are three studies I would like to bring to the attention of the House on the subject of user fees. These studies date back to 1979. As well, there is a study from 1986. Two of them are Canadian studies. The first I would like to address is one which was done by the Ontario Economic Council in 1979, and the authors are M. L. Barer, R. G. Evans and G. L. Stoddart.

I would like to address some of the evidence that these three studies bring forward, with the indulgence of the House, because I think it is such an important discussion. I recognize that the

critic of the official opposition on behalf of his party supports the position I am going to put forward and on the record, whereas the critic for the third party has advocated in fact the position which these studies show is not the case.

The critic for the third party has suggested that user fees and/or extra billing would deter inappropriate use of the health system. This was put forward in his questions. I would like to respond to that in the hope that having set it aside, we can then proceed forward to deal with many of the issues facing the health care system. The first study—

1510

**Mr. Eves:** On a point of privilege, Mr. Chairman: I do not believe I said “user fees.” I believe what I said was that there was some need for some private money in the health care system and that there were many different ways that could be done. If the minister wants to assume that only means user fees for extra billing, I guess that is her decision.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** The question, as posed by the critic for the third party, referred to Bill 94 that specifically ended extra billing, which is seen as a user fee under the Canada Health Act. Perhaps the best place to start would be with a brief look at the Canada Health Act, rather than the study, just so we can clarify that when we are talking about user charges, we are talking about extra billing.

The Canada Health Act, passed unanimously in the federal Parliament, states the following with respect to user charges. This is subsection 19(1), “In order that a province may qualify for a full cash contribution referred to in section 5 for a fiscal year, user charges must not be permitted by the province for that fiscal year under the health care insurance plan of the province.”

Subsection 19(2) states, “Subsection (1) does not apply in respect to user charges for accommodation or meals provided to an inpatient who, in the opinion of the attending physician, requires chronic care and is more or less permanently resident in a hospital or other institution.”

The Health Care Accessibility Act, Bill 94, states the following in subsection 2(1), “A physician or an optometrist who does not submit his or her accounts directly to the plan under section 21 or 22 of the Health Insurance Act or a dentist shall not charge more or accept payment for more than the amount payable under the plan for rendering an insured service to an insured person.

Subsection 2 says, “A practitioner referred to in subsection (1) shall not accept payment in



respect of an insured service rendered to an insured person until after the practitioner receives notice that the patient has been reimbursed by the plan unless the insured person consents to make the payment on an earlier date."

These are the relevant sections of the acts I am referring to. Then we talk about the specific studies. The first study I would like to refer to is the 1979 study of the Ontario Council of Health, which published a user charge for health services study. That one was published here. This was in 1979.

I can quote directly from the study, but what is unique about this particular study is the fact that the Saskatchewan study reported by Beck and Horne really does represent a major natural experiment. A total province was subject to a user fee for doctors and hospital services for three years and three and a half months, from April 15, 1968, to August 1, 1971. The principal conclusions of this study were that:

1. User charges do reduce utilization.
2. There is a sharp contrast and differences in the changes in utilization and that the groups who are most affected by user charges are "the socially disadvantaged, the poor and the elderly." Let me repeat that. The groups who are most affected by user charges are "the socially disadvantaged, the poor and the elderly."
3. There is clear evidence of a rebound effect "involving the partial displacement of care from less to more expensive categories of services." What that says effectively is that less expensive services will be replaced with more expensive services by those people who are ordering and providing those services.
4. There is no evidence that user charges result in a substantial decline in the unnecessary use of hospital or medical services.

These conclusions are supported by the studies that were done by Dr. Beck in Saskatchewan for the period I mentioned, from 1968 to 1972. Beck found that user charges reduced utilization by seven per cent overall, but by as much as 24 per cent among the poor and the disadvantaged.

However, with several groups, the better off or the middle class, the effect of utilization was that there was no change and that in many cases expenditures actually rose.

Beck points out there is no evidence to suggest that any utilization reduction occurred among the less needed or the more frivolous types of services. In fact, he argues that a significant effect, that is, reduction, on the poor resulted in care being diverted to higher-income groups.

That is one study I think is particularly significant. It took place in Saskatchewan, traditionally and specifically a Canadian study. This study makes it clear, in my view, that the health care system as we know it simply cannot function for the benefit of the sick, the poor and the large families and have user fees as a deterrent. User fees deter appropriate care for those who need it: the poor, the sick, the socially disadvantaged.

The irony that this particular study brings to light is that Saskatchewan, as we know, is often held as the cradle of medicare in Canada. They, the innovators and the creators of our medicare system, subjected themselves to this definitive study on user fees as a deterrent and the results are not lost on me or on this government.

There is a second study I would like to bring to the attention of the House. It is the one I referred to earlier and was going to begin with. It was also done in 1979, by the Ontario Economic Council, with the three names M. L. Barer, R. G. Evans and G. L. Stoddart. This one, I believe, in its preface makes some very interesting points.

It states: "The delusion is embodied in the recurring argument that one way to solve the health care cost crisis is to make patients more aware of the cost of providing their care. The argument has two prongs. First, it is asserted that a significant amount of patient-initiated utilization consists of unnecessary care which could be deterred by direct charges. Second, it is often suggested that individuals should assume greater personal responsibility for their health status through preventative lifestyles and should rely less on the medical profession, a transition which would, it is argued by those in support of user charges, be helped if there were direct charges.

"Upon further examination"—these researchers say—"we find that the argument rests on very shaky ground. There is little, if any, evidence to suggest that patients are the primary generators of marginally needed care."

Perhaps because of that, it states there is "no evidence whatever to suggest that the prices tend to deter that segment of care first." In other words, there is nothing to suggest that the deterrent is to unnecessary or inappropriate care.

It goes on to say: "The case against most forms of direct user charges identified in this paper are surprisingly strong." That is the case against. Without going into the whole analysis, I would say the preface concludes with this statement: "The analysis and the evidence in the following pages make their statement, that user charges as a deterrent deter appropriate as well as inappropri-



ate care, makes that clear, at least to these investigators, beyond any reasonable doubt. It appears that the direct charge concept, user charges, is indeed an idea whose time has gone." That is the statement by this significant 1979 report in Ontario.

1520

I would like to comment on some of the aspects of the report. In paragraph 6, it says: "The stated purpose of this paper was to explore, under quite general assumptions, whether direct charges, user charges to patients, offer significant tangible social benefit. Unfortunately for public policy (because such charges are often relatively easily implemented), the answer seems to be no. In fact most policies appear likely to produce positive social harm." That is, where you use a user charge as a deterrent for inappropriate care, you often get the reverse.

It goes on to say the impact of user charges and these schemes on patterns of utilization is clearly perverse and there is no evidence to suggest that the consumption of the least necessary services will be deterred.

The last comment I would like to read from this study is on its last page, which is 116, for those who are looking for a reference: "In summary, then, it should be now clear that the scope for deployment of user charges as a strategy for cost containment or efficiency enhancement is extremely limited." It goes on to say, "By reason of identifying linking of health costs and provider incomes, it seems fair to suggest, therefore, that indiscriminate introduction of such charges runs the not inconsiderable risk of creating a health cost snare from which it may be far more difficult to get disentangled than from the one in which some perceive us to be caught at present."

In other words, that is, I think, a very significant statement. But it says, "The tone of the preceding chapters has been predominantly negative," indicating that in their assessment, the scope for using direct charges to patients to control health care costs is small. It should not come as a surprise, then, that they find few proposals, new or old, in the direct charges area, that is, user fees, worthy of further serious consideration.

It goes on, and this is the last line: "Only when the consumer has a chance to make informed choices among therapeutically equivalent service packages can we expect him to bear financial consequences for such choices. In the present structure of health care delivery, most proposals for patient participation in health care financing

reduces to misguided or cynical efforts to tax the ill and/or to drive up the total cost of health care while shifting some of the burden from government."

I think this report is a very excellent one, from 1979, which speaks to the issue of user charges.

The last study I would like to make sure the House is aware of is a more recent one. This is from 1986 by the Rand Corp., out of Los Angeles. This is a special article and it relates to the inappropriate use of hospitals in a randomized trial of health insurance plans. The data coming from this survey show that because cost sharing did not selectively reduce inappropriate hospitalization, it is therefore important to develop other mechanisms to do so.

The study, which I think is available, was published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*. It states a couple of very interesting features. As I said, this is from the Rand Corp. "Cost Sharing and Inappropriate Admissions to Hospitals: Cost sharing, user fees, failed to decrease inappropriate admissions or hospital days selectively."

Then it goes on to say that, "Because cost sharing reduced appropriate hospitalization, we infer that some patients whom physicians would have appropriately hospitalized were deterred by the cost of seeking help."

The policy implications, as this article states, are that "cost sharing reduces inappropriate hospital use, but at the price of reducing appropriate use as well. Several strategies to reduce inappropriate care have been suggested. For example, reviews of charts with results being provided quickly to physicians might reduce inappropriate hospital days—without resorting (in the case of the third-party payer) to denial of claim."

Then they refer to a suggestion from Dr. J. E. Wennberg, who has proposed giving local groups of providers information comparing their admission rates with those from other geographic areas, to stimulate discussion on how admission rates could be reduced. This supports my contention, and one that we have discussed here in the House, which I think is extremely important, that it is the physicians in this province who determine what is appropriate as far as admission to hospital is concerned, and when and who should be given priority. There is no intention whatever that government should interfere with that medical judgement.

However, this report states, "To make the current and future physicians aware of the problem, medical education, residency training



and continuing medical education could stress more efficient use of our hospitals. If these strategies succeed, the study suggests there could be a downward pressure on hospital occupancy rates," and that would be a satisfactory result, based on information being given to physicians. In fact, that is much of the study that is being done.

Overall in our discussion of user fees, which we know are illegal under the Canada Health Act that was passed unanimously in the federal Parliament, we have some conclusions that I think are important to capsulize. This Rand study I just referred to, conducted in the United States, showed similar results to the two Canadian studies: that there was a similar decline in utilization, with no evidence unnecessary services were actually being cut out. The paper dealing with user fees by the Ontario Economic Council stated very clearly that the user fee concept, and I agree with this, is a concept whose time has gone.

As we are discussing this, and since the critic of the third party was raising many of the issues that had been raised by advocates for user charges, I think it is important to spend a moment just discussing what it is they say. Advocates of user charges claim they will discourage inappropriate care. We know the studies do not bear this out. It is rather the use of health care services by the poor, the disadvantaged, whose need is greater and whose health status we wish to improve, that are in fact reduced.

Some advocates of user charges claim they make the user more aware of the costs and thereby produce a voluntary reduction in utilization. However, we believe that there are more sensitive ways to accomplish this. I would like to bring to the attention of the members of the House the fact that Alberta is at the present time giving the users of its system the information from the computer system. We are watching what is happening in Alberta, as far as consciousness raising and the effect on the population is concerned, as they start to see what the system is actually costing. Alberta sends all its subscribers and users an invoice showing what they have actually cost the system.

1530

It is important to note, as we are watching what is happening from the Alberta example, that we would be able to undertake such a feedback system in community care when the Ontario health insurance plan computer project is complete. Current registration under our OHIP

system makes that extremely difficult because we have people registered by family.

We know that the OHIP computer system is 20 years out of date and, in fact, the Provincial Auditor has acknowledged that there are some 24 million files for 9.5 million people. This results from the fact that when you reach 21 you receive your own number, when you get married you get a new number, when you get divorced you get a new number, when you get a new job you get a new number. But in fact, at the present time, while there are approximately 24 million records on file, the actual number of actives is about 4.8 million out of a population of 9.2 million, which is why the gathering of data and information makes this quite difficult.

There are 2.6 million that are family accounts, and the protection of personal privacy, which is the other side of freedom of information, makes it very difficult for us now, with an antiquated and outdated computer system, to give people the kind of information that Alberta is providing to them.

For the information of members of the House, when Ontario's new computer system is completed, and I expect that will be completed in about two years—and when we do, by the way, it will be the most advanced in North America—we will be able to provide users with information on the use and the costs of the system. I have had this advice over the past year from numerous people who say they believe that giving people information will result in an awareness that could lead to more appropriate use of services, and we all acknowledge that that would be a good thing.

Again, as we begin the debate on the Ministry of Health estimates in answers to questions, I believe it is extremely important that we set aside the notion that user fees as a deterrent to inappropriate care are appropriate.

In fact, if we can all agree with the decision taken in the federal Parliament in 1984 which said that the principles of universality and comprehensiveness in fact are what make our Canadian health care system unique in the world, it will give us the opportunity, now that we have built a system which is recognized, although it faces many of the challenges of other health care systems around the world, to recognize that it is envied by most of those who know what we do and how we do it, that it is acknowledged as the best-funded national health system in the world and that our role is now to protect, maintain and enhance the quality of care, the accessibility, the universality and the comprehensiveness of our system in these very challenging times.



I believe it is important, as we begin this debate and this discussion on the Ministry of Health estimates, to acknowledge that in fact we have a system which works remarkably well, notwithstanding the enormous challenges that face us; that this is acknowledged by people who come from around the world to view our system, recognizing the enormous challenges that geography presents to us, the enormous challenges that we have in trying to provide services in both large urban centres and small communities; and that the three enormous and what I refer to as irresistible and compelling forces for change, which are the economic realities, the ageing population and the changing technology, which is changing so rapidly, must be presented with the kinds of solutions we seek together through consensus, the kinds of solutions which will maintain that which we as Canadians have worked so hard to build and achieve, that which we, I believe, are justifiably proud of, which we view as a source of pride and also with a sense of our future security.

I would urge members in this House to acknowledge that the basic principles upon which our medicare system is founded, the fundamentals of that system, are sound, and that any changes we make in the future must respond sensitively to those issues which are raised. Mr. Chairman, if anyone would like to discuss that issue further before we proceed, I would be pleased to spend a few minutes doing that so we can then set this aside as an issue and move forward.

**Mr. Chairman:** Do other members wish to participate?

**Mr. Mackenzie:** Not on the minister's comments, but just on the course of the estimates. I would like to do a bit of history for the minister, which I am sure she has been brought up to date on by now or I presume she has been brought up to date on in the past. I want to refer first, if I may, to a Hansard, Legislature of Ontario Debates, Tuesday, November 30, 1976, the first year I was a member, a full year after I was first elected to this House. My colleague Mr. Deans is speaking, and I will quote from page 5252 of that Hansard:

"I understand from a letter that I received yesterday or the day before, on Friday last, that Mr. Orris was meeting again with the Hamilton-Wentworth health council to discuss their progress in determining the possibility of providing some kind of health-care facility for the east end of the Hamilton area. My colleague the member for Hamilton East (Mr. Mackenzie) and I,

together with his predecessor, have probably spent more time on this one problem than we have on any single problem that I can recall. I wouldn't be exaggerating if I were to say that we haven't been entirely happy with the progress."

I am going to leave it there and skip to a further comment the same day, the same debate:

"There is a rather large expansion of homes and families taking place in the east end of the city of Hamilton and in the Stoney Creek area, which my colleague from Hamilton East and I jointly represent. I think that anyone looking at Hamilton would appreciate that the facilities currently available are not geared to meet the needs of that expansion and that expansion is likely to continue for some considerable period of time. The emphasis that has been placed on the rebuilding of the Hamilton General Hospital, necessary though it may well be in the eyes of some, I think is undue, over and against the needs that are evident in the east end of the city and the west end of the town of Stoney Creek.

"I would like to ask the minister, given that it is now slightly over two years," which would have been back in 1974, "since I got what I considered to be a commitment from the minister, whether he thinks that maybe we could expect to see something more concrete before the next election. I am not sure when that might occur."

I will not continue with his comments but will skip from there to Mr. Miller's comments, the Minister of Health at the time. He is talking about Mr. Orris once again, a letter from Mr. Orris to Mr. Auld, the Chairman of Management Board: "In fact we wrote into our request for a rationalization of the beds in the city of Hamilton an insistence that part of the city get the proper level of health care—health services I think is the way we defined it—and we are pushing them. I believe we are meeting with them again on Monday next."

That Hansard is from November 30, 1976, and refers to a letter and a commitment my colleague Mr. Deans, the member for Wentworth at the time, got in 1974. I do not know how many times, but it has been raised since by Mr. Deans. I have a few of the other Hansards here. It has been raised by myself. It has been raised over the last 10 to 12 years. Part of the rationalization for the money that went into the Hamilton General was that this facility would be built in the east end of Hamilton. It got downgraded from the full hospital they first pushed for to St. Joseph's ambulatory care centre or an emergency centre, overnight care.



1540

I want to skip ahead if I can. There has been a lot of pressure on this and a firm commitment, and it seemed to be coming to fruition over the last two or three years. A number of people were very prominent in pushing for it—one of the current Liberal members, the member for Wentworth East (Ms. Collins), and the current cabinet minister, the member for Hamilton Centre (Ms. Oddie Munro). I am not sure if the current Minister of Education (Mr. Ward) was directly involved; I believe he was supportive. But I know the other two, back of course before they were elected and shortly after, were supposedly on side in pushing this project.

I want to read into the record now, if I can, a letter that I hope the minister has seen. I know a copy of it went to her colleague the member for Wentworth East, and it is in response to a letter I sent on September 6 this year. The letter is dated October 12, 1988, addressed to me, and it reads as follows:

“Dear Bob:

“Thank you for your letter of September 6, 1988, expressing your concerns over the great delay in progress towards the starting of building the St. Joseph’s ambulatory care centre. Minister Caplan’s reply to you, dated August 8, 1988, is certainly a put-off.

“It has already been established by many studies that the best and most economical way to treat ill and injured people was on an ambulatory basis, if at all possible. As has been discussed many, many times before, the emergency departments at all the hospitals are a disgrace, because of the great overloads, not only of true emergency cases, but of many cases of illnesses which could have been treated in an ambulatory care centre. The CEO at Joseph Brant where I practise, Donald Scott, told me how happy he would be if all of the people from East Hamilton and Stoney Creek could be treated over here, and not add to the congestion they are experiencing in Burlington. I am sure it is the same at Hamilton Civic’s and St. Joseph’s, from the great complaints of people who have had to use the emergency departments.

“It would, indeed, seem to us that with all the large money that has been given to the hospitals in Hamilton, both for new construction and operation, that there should be at least a small amount available to this east area. As before, the money seems to flow quite readily to the central and western region hospitals. When, as mentioned above, the principle of an ambulatory care

centre is such a great idea, how come there is such a delay?

“We have talked to Shirley Collins on several occasions, and in July she sent me a transcript, (L-1435-1, June 29, 1988) in which she put the question to the Minister of Health, Mrs. Caplan, who replied, ‘I want to assure the member and her constituents that once the plans received by the ministry are acceptable, the normal planning processes will continue...’ Since that time, we have been advised by St. Joseph’s that the revised plans have been sent in.

“It would seem, and I believe it has been acknowledged, that the Health ministry is in marked financial difficulties. However, the amount needed to go forward on the building of an ambulatory care centre in the East Hamilton-Stoney Creek area is so small in relation to the other expenditures that are being made elsewhere. After all, a Health minister promised us ‘that an ambulatory care facility to serve the needs of the people in the east end was a prerequisite to the rebuilding of the Hamilton General Hospital.’ After these many years, the ‘new General’ is being used and we have been held up, with many months yet before this needed facility is available to the people of our area. Shirley’s statement in the Hamilton Spectator of September 28, 1988, gives us some reassurance, but, as always, the question is when.

“I presented your letter of concern to our board on the 3rd of October, 1988, and they wished me to express their thanks and appreciation for your efforts.”

And so on. I read it into the record on purpose. This is a promise that has been made, has been confirmed by Health ministers in this House. Maybe this minister now does not agree that she has to go ahead with it; I do not know. We have been delayed and delayed and delayed, and the need is there. The need is obvious. I remember from the time in the House it was being raised by my colleague that it was a prerequisite of the finishing and the large amount of money that was spent on the Hamilton General.

What was the minister’s expression in her letter, if I can find it here, that she sent to me? “I would like to assure you that the planning process for an east-end ambulatory care centre is continuing.”

It has been planned to death. The plans have been submitted. As far as I know, changes were made when the ministry requested them. We are still sitting now with it more on the back burner than ever. Is it because we now have two cabinet



ministers from the Hamilton area and one other backbencher? Now that we have these people elected who before were fighting for it from the sidelines, is that one of the reasons why it is now on the back burner and we are having such great difficulty in getting a confirmation and a go-ahead on this project?

When my colleague said it was an issue which took a lot of the time of himself and myself back in 1976, he was right on. It is as much or more a concern today. It seems that year after year after year goes by and we get nowhere closer to it, even when we get to the point where they are almost ready to break sod at ceremonies and lots of foofaraw just a few months back.

I would like to ask the minister what is going on. Why are we on the back burner? When are we going to see this project go ahead, or is it now not on the list of priorities for this particular government in Ontario?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** I would like to tell my colleague the member for Hamilton East that what concerns me about the tone of his question is the reference to the partisan nature of what he sees as the process.

I have stated in this House on numerous occasions, and when I have crossed the provinces and spoken to communities, that I do not believe health care is a partisan issue. I believe every region of this province should expect, and rightly so, its fair share of available resources based on a rational planning process, one which we will all respect as being a rational planning process.

I think we could spend quite a lot of time if we wanted to get into the banter back and forth about the number of projects which have been approved in the Hamilton area, but I do not intend to do that. I want to address very specifically the response since I have been Minister of Health to the requests from around this province, whether they have been for capital, which I am particularly concerned about, or other projects.

In fact, a number of projects have been discussed and approved at various stages of our planning process, particularly in the area of capital. As the member knows, the ministry is at the present time reviewing capital projects. More than reviewing the projects, we are reviewing the process.

We presently have a capital planning process that has seven stages. One of the concerns I have about that is that from the time the first announcement is made, often the scope, the nature of the project changes; the cost of the project escalates and accelerates. As the project goes through each step of the process, there

seems to be some kind of almost adversarial contact with the ministry.

It is my view that if we review how this process proceeds through each stage and what the expectations are—because when the ministry makes its announcement, it announces a dollar figure and a scope for the project, and I think it is very important that communities understand that the planning within the ministry is based on that initial announcement—what happens as we go through each step of that process will result possibly, and has in the past, in all kinds of delays if the scope expands and costs increase. That creates a lot of frustration out in communities. So I hear what the member opposite is saying.

This particular centre, he knows well, has been under consideration for many years. I have had numerous discussions with my colleague the member for Wentworth East, as well as the member for Hamilton Centre and the member for Wentworth North (Mr. Ward), about the planning process and the need for a facility.

On July 28, 1987, there was an increase in the budget for this particular centre from \$15 million to \$17.19 million. That was approved by the minister in 1987. We know as well that the regional government is going to be providing some \$3 million and that there is a campaign under way right now within the community to raise \$2.7 million over the next four years.

We know as well that the working drawings have been reviewed and that this project is under active review in our capital planning branch, which has undergone many changes in the past year as we have been looking at this process and reviewing all of our projects. It seems to me that our commitment to the people of this province must be that we plan for new facilities in a rational way, based on the very best of planning principles.

#### 1550

I think it is important that we take a moment to discuss this particular centre, the east-end ambulatory care centre, in the light of how this reflects the changes in the delivery of medical services, which has occurred and which the member has alluded to in his question. We know that today inpatient services—and beds specifically—are not the only way of providing services. In fact, someone actually said to me, “You know, minister, beds are no longer the benchmark for services.”

Technology is allowing us to do more and more on an ambulatory and outpatient basis. We know, as well, that outpatient and ambulatory



care means less chance of unfortunate infection, which sometimes comes from being in hospital. We know for the provision of cataract surgery, as one example, that today some 70 per cent of all cataract eye surgery is done on an outpatient basis. We can see this shift of what is now possible from inpatient care to outpatient and ambulatory care.

Another very good example of what technology is allowing us to do on an outpatient basis is the new lithotripsy machine, which we have discussed in this House on a few occasions. In fact, just as before, when people had cataracts, they had to be in a bed—one person in one bed for five days—when you can now perhaps do five people in one day on an outpatient basis. When it comes to this new lithotripsy machine, people who used to be in a hospital bed for 14 to 20 days following surgery with the risk of infection can now be done on an outpatient basis using some very new technology and new equipment.

What I am being told by health planners is that this talks about the need to make the kinds of positive shifts from inpatient services and that it is appropriate to use some of those inpatient resources to maintain and enhance services on an outpatient basis.

When we look at this facility and other proposals, we are looking at the opportunity that outpatient services provide us to provide those kinds of services which were traditionally provided only in an in-hospital, inpatient environment. In fact, that is what the Independent Health Facilities Act is all about as well—using technology to deliver effective quality services as close to home as possible in an environment that will provide us with the same level of quality care.

I can tell the member that this particular facility, which has been under review for a number of years in its planning, is now, I would say, at the end of this process. I am hopeful that in the near future we will be able to respond once they have met all of the criteria which the ministry requires for accountability of a facility in the areas of providing the kinds of services that an ambulatory care centre can and should provide in meeting the changing needs of the community it serves.

**Mr. Mackenzie:** I beg—I surrender—no more bafflegab. Will the minister just assure me—she is now telling us she wants to review the process. We are reviewing the plans and everything for this centre, which has been approved for a long time. I would hope that she is not telling me that she now has to review the process and then

rereview the plans. That is certainly what it sounds like. I would hope that she can answer as to whether or not we are going to see this finally go ahead. That is all I wanted to know because it has been promised for a long time.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** I understand that the assistant deputy minister for institutional health, who has been with the ministry since September, recently met with the people in Hamilton to discuss the proposal. I want to assure the member that it is receiving active consideration.

**Mr. McLean:** I understand that we adjourned at vote 1801 item 1 and we are dealing with the estimates of the Ministry of Health. I want to start off by reading an editorial that I have noticed and I am curious to know if the minister agrees with how this editorial reads. It says:

“In an effort to monitor the work and billing of Ontario’s doctors, the provincial government has introduced legislation which would give government inspectors immense powers to search and seize records of private doctors and their patients. The new Independent Health Facilities Act would allow government bureaucrats to enter medical offices without a warrant and take whatever records they want. They could take account books, payroll and employment records, patient records and even personal correspondence. It even allows them to seize urine or blood samples of patients.

“While medical practices require some policing and government inspectors must have powers, this goes much too far,” this editorial says. It says it is downright dangerous. I would like the minister to comment on that in her reply.

I have some comments I want to make with regard to heart surgery and bypass. As late as last evening at a function I was at with my colleague, a person came to me and said: “I’m waiting for heart bypass surgery. What can you do to help me?” This seems to be a common occurrence.

I have a letter here from a Mrs. Potts whose original date for surgery in July, 1988 was cancelled and rebooked for August, then cancelled and booked twice in September, which was also cancelled. She was finally admitted at the end of September; her problem is that she only has half a kidney. “The surgery I had in September was not the success the doctor had anticipated and wants me back for more surgery in two to four weeks.”

I would appreciate it if the minister would comment on the problem that we appear to be having with regard to surgery for problems such as this.



I want to indicate to the minister another constituent of mine whom I had a letter from this month. He is a young man who needs a heart bypass and he writes me a lengthy letter, of which I have sent the minister a copy and I am waiting for a reply. I just wanted to say that he indicates to me that he will be waiting a year before he finally gets his bypass and before he is able to work again. He is a truck driver and he will have problems making ends meet. He indicates that he will have to probably go on welfare. The indication that he makes is that it will be next July or August before he will finally get his surgery.

I am concerned about why and what has gone wrong here with regard to heart surgery. The minister had indicated a few minutes ago that the problem is really not bad, that she is trying to do a lot of out-surgery. I say to her, I think there is a problem here.

The other area of concern that I have, and I would anticipate some replies from the minister on it, has to do with regard to knee joints or hip replacements. I have a letter here from a Mr. Sinclair who indicates that it will be August 27, 1990, before he can get into the hospital to have his surgery.

My understanding is that Dr. Hugh Cameron at the Wellesley Hospital has indicated in a letter that it was \$1.6 million last year and this year it will be \$1 million only. He says: "All hips booked until the end of June can be done. Thereafter a very significant reduction in numbers will be necessary, producing long delays."

1600

That is my second area of concern. Why is it taking so long for these people to get their hips or knees replaced? Obviously, it has been indicated that there is a cutback.

I have another letter here from a Mrs. Pearson, who indicates in her letter that the government seems to have its priorities a little mixed up.

"My husband is a veteran. In March he was in pretty good health for age 65. He had a heart attack, and when the time comes for him to need surgery, which is not too far away, the waiting list is terrifying. He also has arthritis very bad in his knees and he may need surgery and the waiting list for that is just the same."

What is the minister's answer to those? What do I tell these people who have to wait until 1990 for hip and joint replacements?

The other area of concern that I have has to do with the shortage of nurses in Ontario. I am wondering what program the minister has in

place to try to make sure that our health care is not falling down more badly than it is.

The Chairman of Management Board, in a letter to Mrs. Jean Yeo, R. R. 7, Orillia, thanks her for her letter and says: "I fully understand your concerns and the difficulties which arise due to a nurse shortage. I have taken the liberty of forwarding a copy of your letter to the Honourable Elinor Caplan."

It will be interesting to find out what the reply is to the nursing shortage in Ontario.

The other area of concern that I have relates to the dialysis treatment in the province. The hospitals will allow people to take them home in some cases. However, their commitment is the renovation of their home and the necessary trained staff persons to assist them. I understand it is a very costly device. However, I am concerned with regard to the number of beds. There are two that are available for the city of Orillia and the whole surrounding area, and I am wondering what program the minister has in place that she anticipates expanding on that.

The other area that I want to speak just briefly on and to ask her what she is going to do, and I know my colleague asked her a question in the House the other day, is with regard to the assistive devices program. That was a commitment that her government had made and was to be implemented by the end of this year and has not taken place.

I had a constituent in to see me the other day, a Mr. Ellis. There are many people who appear to be waiting to find out if there is going to be funding. He is very concerned. His business is down because of the wait and he really wants to know. I would hope that the minister will be able to tell us shortly what she is going to do with regard to that program.

Some time ago, I indicated in a statement I made to the Minister of Tourism and Recreation (Mr. O'Neil) that if he would look into the possibility of having a lottery that would be directed strictly to capital for health care, I think that is an area that I would like to see expanded on. I know that the government, with regard to Bill 119, is trying to do that. However, they are not doing anything specifically. They are making an overall allotment that can go into health care, but not protecting the cultural and recreation aspect of that side of it. I want to know if there would be a possibility of a special lottery or a special hospital fund for capital, if they would consider that.

The other area that I want to speak on briefly is that it has been indicated to me that up until about



a month ago, we had three ambulances in the city of Orillia. It is a government-operated ambulance service. In the town of Midland and the town of Collingwood, I believe those are privately owned.

I have been informed that they have taken one out of Orillia and expanded the one in Collingwood, and they are using that as a backup, thereby saving the province funds. The Ministry of Health has put more money into the private operators, in order to have them operating more ambulances, and the ministry running fewer. That is what I have been told and I would like to know if that is a fact.

In September of 1987, the Honourable Murray Elston, the minister at that time, had indicated that there was a commitment to the addition for the Orillia Soldiers' Memorial Hospital of \$30 million. I would like to know if that commitment is still there. Does the commitment which the minister made in September of last year stand today, or is the minister looking at other alternatives, as suggested by the hospital board, for a new facility?

The Huronia Medical Centre has land that is available for that facility and Simcoe College has land available for that facility. I would like to know, Mr. Chairman, what the minister's intentions are with regard to that hospital. A \$5 million fund-raising program that has taken place as of January 1, 1988, has been very successful. They have almost \$4.5 million that they have committed to the hospital, whether for its addition or for a new one. I think it is up to the minister now to indicate to the citizens what her ministry is going to do. They have to know.

The final question regards the Oakridge facility in Penetanguishene. I understand there is going to be a sod-turning there very shortly with regards to an addition. I look forward to attending that with your colleague. I am wondering if there is anything in the ministry directive on when the new facility will be on stream.

Those are some of the major concerns that I have, Madam Minister, and I think major concerns that are deserving of an answer. Maybe I should mention the other concern that has been brought to me through many letters: naturopaths, who have indicated that in legislation they may no longer be able to practise. I would like the minister to assure me that that is not the case and that they will be able to continue to carry on.

The final question is related to the drug plan. I have had many people come to me and indicate that some doctors are ordering prescriptions that they feel they do not need—abusing the system,

so to speak. I am wondering if there is a checkpoint that the ministry has with regard to that. I have even received letters from people saying that when they go to Florida they get six months' supply; they have a million-dollar complex down there that they live in. Is that fair to the people of this province who are paying the eight per cent sales tax to help supplement drugs?

Those are some of the concerns that I have, and I would appreciate if the minister would be able to provide me with the answers to them.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** I would like to begin with the very first question that was raised by the member, which the Independent Health Facilities Act, and take this opportunity to say that I look forward to a second reading debate here in this House, where we will fully explore the principles of the act and then, in fact, vote in principle. I am assuming that following a second reading the act would be referred to the appropriate committee, so that we could continue on to the legislative process.

I mentioned the act in response to the very first question today, because this act gives us an opportunity to respond to technological change. The Independent Health Facilities Act recognizes the fact that technology is now allowing us to do much on an outpatient, ambulatory basis in the community outside of the traditional, formal institutional structure which previously required a traditional hospital institutional environment.

1610

This is an act to allow for the planned expansion of community-based facilities to help us achieve the vision which I have talked about often in this House and which I believe the member agrees with, and that is that what we want is equity in access to effective, quality health care, the very best that we can afford, as close to home as possible.

We recognize that there are many services that can be provided safely and give us effective quality in a community-based setting which previously could be provided only in the traditional hospital environment. The reason I am stressing this at this point is that I believe, and I believe the member opposite and every member of this House believes, that we should have the same opportunity to have quality assurance in an independent health facility that we presently have in hospital, that we have the same kind of confidentiality for the patient in an independent health facility that we presently have in hospital. These are some of the basic fundamental principles of the act. I believe my role as Health minister is to give us the greatest level of quality



assurance and protection of the public we can have. That is my role, and I take that very seriously.

When I look at the opportunities of this new act and when I talk to people about what the act provides us, I listen very carefully to the concerns they raise. On the issue of the ability to enter an independent health facility or a health facility where we are concerned, based on reasonable information, that perhaps there may be an illegal operating room or an independent health facility which has not been licensed, we must be able to ensure quality assurance in a way which gives protection to the public as well as appropriate protection to the provider. That is a fundamental I think we all believe in.

To achieve this, we are meeting and discussing with the regulatory colleges their role in assisting under the act. I want to tell the member that the Ministry of Health officials are meeting with the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario to discuss its potential role in helping us give the public the quality assurance mechanism in an independent health facility and to determine what, if any, its role would be.

Under the Public Hospitals Act, as I am sure the member is aware, the minister can today, where there are concerns about patient care, where there are concerns about management or governance, send in an investigator as I did earlier this year and as I have said I would do if any member has concerns about quality of patient care, quality of management and administration. That power exists today under the Public Hospitals Act.

Under the Nursing Homes Act, an act which was crafted by members of this House, where patient care and quality assurance standards are set in legislation, the minister has the power to send in investigators and assessors to ensure that quality assurance.

We know that quality assurance requires access to patient records on a peer review basis. Any physician will tell you that is the basis of peer review and quality assurance. That today is going on in hospitals, and those professionals have an obligation to maintain patient confidentiality as part of their professional responsibility. A breach of that confidentiality is professional misconduct and their colleges, whether it is the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario or the College of Nurses of Ontario or any of the regulatory colleges, would treat that very seriously. The Independent Health Facilities Act treats that very seriously as well, and for the first time in health legislation one sees very substan-

tial penalties for breaches of confidentiality. I want to point that out to the member.

I believe the new act will give us the opportunity to plan for the appropriate distribution of community-based services. It will give us the legislative framework to fund these services appropriately. It provides us great opportunities, particularly in rural communities and northern communities. There is a real opportunity to use this act to respond to the needs of the people of Ontario and I accept the fact that confidentiality, accountability of the provider and quality assurance are extremely important. As minister, I want to assure the people of the province and the members of this House that I take that responsibility very seriously.

We are at the present time talking to the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario, which has the responsibility to enter a physician's office right now and do a peer review to ensure quality assurance in physicians' offices, to see whether or not it can advise us on ensuring quality assurance in the Independent Health Facilities Act in such a way that we can maintain the highest level of patient confidentiality and the highest level of provider accountability to the people of this province.

The second issue that was raised by the member, which I would like to address, was also raised by the critic, the member for Parry Sound (Mr. Eves). He referred to the long waiting lists for surgery, both elective and nonelective, in urban centres. I would like for a minute to separate the issue of cardiovascular care from the issue which was raised of orthopaedics and dialysis and respond to those separately because they are quite different in the response.

Let me first address the issue of cardiovascular care. I guess one of the things that concerns me the most is that our system is designed to make sure that people who require urgent care receive it first. One of the things that we do is to monitor the capacity of our system to make sure that it responds to what we expect is going to be the need, whether it is for surgery or for other services, and that we accordingly fund those services after we have done appropriate planning based on good information.

We know that in the past three years, without any increase in the incidence of heart disease, there has been a significant increase in the numbers of people recommended for this surgery. When I became Health minister, I became aware of this information. I know that cardiovascular care, cardiovascular surgery, coronary artery bypass are procedures which are under



intensive study right now both by clinical epidemiologists and health researchers. I know that a study was recently completed by CHEPA, the Centre for Health Economics and Policy Analysis in Hamilton. Dr. Greg Stoddart and Dr. Jonathan Lomas had been reviewing coronary artery bypass surgery and have recently published a study.

**1620**

The ministry has responded in a number of ways to this need for capacity increase because of the fact that there has been, I believe, almost a 50 per cent increase in the number of people recommended for surgery. I announced in June a province-wide expansion of programs both to prevent and to treat heart disease.

We have increased critical care beds at three Toronto hospitals to expand Metropolitan Toronto's ability to handle more cardiac surgery, as well as an immediate expansion in cardiac surgery cases of some 400 in Toronto, at the same time, I met with the surgeons and the cardiologists and administrators to ask whether they could implement. They said that it would take a little time, that there were some capital changes in requirements that had to be made, but that they felt that they would be able to expand the capacity of Toronto.

We increased operating funding for the Heart Institute in Ottawa, at the Ottawa Civic Hospital, to expand its case load, and it opened six referral beds and expanded its artificial heart program.

We also increased operating funds to Victoria Hospital in London to expand the number of balloon angioplasties, which are also called angioplasty procedures. This is a new procedure, one that it was originally thought would decrease the need for surgery in some cases; the information that we had in 1985 suggested that the amount of surgery would decline. In fact, the opposite occurred and, as I have said, we have seen a significant increase in the numbers of people recommended for this surgery.

We have funded an expansion to establish a new cardiac arrhythmia unit at the University Hospital in London to allow for the more efficient use of the intensive care for acutely ill patients; and as part of the \$80-million redevelopment of the Hamilton Civic Hospitals, the Hamilton General site has expanded its heart diagnostic facilities and doubled the number of intensive care beds from 15 to 30, as well as increasing the stepdown beds to allow for this expansion.

There was an expansion of the heart and vascular care program to allow for an increase in

heart surgery case loads from 300 to 400 patients per year at Sudbury Memorial Hospital. I want to tell the member that I was just recently in Sudbury and they have a superb program for cardiovascular care.

The additional heart program funds approved by the ministry have been and are being flowed to the hospitals as they are implementing the expanded capacity of their programs. We are hoping to have all of the expanded programs in place by the end of 1988 and the beginning of 1989.

I think this is significant, because this is where we can use technology to make sure that people have access to that care when they need it: The new central cardiac bed registry pilot project, which was announced by me last June, is expected to be in operation in 1989. The registry will match the available resources with the patients requiring the most urgent cardiovascular care.

It is important for the members to know that this central bed registry is being designed by the physicians themselves. What they intend to have is common language in definition so that they will be able to work together to make sure that those needing most urgent care receive that care first.

Toronto Hospital is going to be the host institution for the registry program, which was developed and proposed by the Metropolitan Toronto District Health Council with advice from cardiovascular experts and, in fact, physicians are actively involved in the designing of this registry.

It is also important to note that the physicians of this province have the responsibility for determining who should receive urgent care and in what priority. They use their very best medical judgement to do that.

I mentioned that we now have in place a cardiovascular co-ordinator so that, as I mentioned in my response, we can look at our program on a province-wide basis. This allows us to help achieve that vision, even where we have tertiary care requirements—that is the highest level and the most complex of care—available in different centres of the province, so that people can then choose where they wish to go and which physician they want to use.

We acknowledge that there has been a demand for an increase in cardiovascular surgery capacity. I believe that the announcement last June of some \$18 million, plus some capital resources, and the announcement for the first time of health promotion and disease prevention dollars as part



of our heart and cardiovascular program, are very significant because we know that much of heart disease can be prevented by a healthy lifestyle. So we are looking now at the cardiovascular co-ordinator position as monitoring on an on-going basis, being an advocate within the ministry, making sure that we have all the information we require to determine what changes in our province-wide system we should have so that we can respond most appropriately.

The member mentioned orthopaedics as well. I would like to state that the response on orthopaedics is very different from the response on such issues as he raised with cardiovascular care. The difference there is that orthopaedics and orthopaedic surgery—hips, knees and back surgery—is provided in many more centres by many more physicians across the province than is cardiovascular care, and he really cannot compare the two. In fact, we know that even in Metropolitan Toronto, depending upon which hospital you go to and which surgeon you choose, the waiting time varies significantly.

When we did a small survey from the ministry, we found that those waiting times varied anywhere from many, many months to just a few weeks. This tells us that perhaps there are opportunities if patients wish to ask not only for a referral to a physician but also what the waiting time would be. We have many centres, not only in the large urban centres but also in some of the smaller centres across the province, where very fine quality orthopaedic surgery is provided. It is not necessary to look only to the tertiary care centres of the large teaching hospitals in the major urban centres of this province for much of the surgery. By having a system where this is provided across the province in numerous communities by very fine surgeons, people have a choice.

I would say to the member that patients in need of orthopaedic surgery can ask their physician for an appropriate referral to a very fine orthopaedic surgeon in a smaller community or in another hospital if they are not satisfied with their place on the waiting list of the surgeon they have been referred to. But it is up to the surgeon to determine where on that list their patients come.

We know that it is the responsibility of the physician to determine who should receive surgery first. In orthopaedic surgery—hips and knees and back surgery—it is up to physicians to use their very best medical judgement. But it is important for the people of the province to know that the surgery is provided in a number of

centres and that they can request appropriate referral.

The member mentioned dialysis treatment as well. I would like to take a moment to mention to him the fact that dialysis, which is so important to the people of this province suffering from kidney disease and kidney problems, is an example of how medicine is changing and how technology is allowing us to provide services in many different ways.

We know that traditionally and formerly, dialysis treatment was provided only in hospital on an inpatient basis. Then it changed and you could have dialysis treatment on an outpatient basis within the hospital environment.

**1630**

Today, we know dialysis is being provided in a community-based setting. In fact, I was recently at the opening of a haemodialysis centre at Yonge and Sheppard, sponsored by a number of hospitals together, where patients can come in and in a self-help centre learn how to provide their treatment with the advice and assistance of the professional experts, which would then lead in many cases to the opportunity to provide this treatment and service at home. We know home care also provides dialysis services across the province.

When I talk about the delivery of health care and the fact that beds are not the benchmark of how services are provided, I think dialysis treatment and the response to kidney disease is a very good example of how we provide inpatient service, community-based service and home care service so we can respond to the different needs of the people of the province.

I want the member to know I have asked the district health councils to review the need for dialysis services in their communities, to review what is existing, so we can again plan for a province-wide program and response in the area of kidney disease and haemodialysis.

It looks like the member for Lake Nipissing wants to ask a question on this subject and I will yield. Did the member want to respond?

**Mr. McLean:** It would be interesting to have my questions answered because I am sure he would have others besides the one she is commenting on now. Perhaps the minister, instead of giving me a speech every time, could just give me the answers.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** I want to make sure when I give the answers that they are full and complete and that I use this time so the members fully understand the challenges facing us, and in fact



how different one question is from the other even if it is within the same general field.

I thought the member for Nipissing had a question that was related to this and I thought the member might yield.

**Mr. Pouliot:** I have a few comments. First and foremost, I know it is difficult for the minister. She is so very busy attempting to respond to the legitimate grievances regarding pitfalls and shortcomings under her ministry that she has very little time to remind herself that I am the member for the riding of Lake Nipigon. Of course, the riding of Nipissing is in the near north, so that is not too bad.

Je prends plaisir à participer, brièvement, au débat sur les débours du ministère de la Santé.

For a second, with respect of course, I thought when I listened to the minister with sincerity describe the high-tech facilities that are available, mostly in southern Ontario, coupled with her repetitious claim that the health system in Ontario is "second to none, a system we can all be proud of"—she will understand that by virtue of the riding I represent, I thought for a second I was on another planet.

If you do not have access, for instance, to a doctor, if you live in a community of 500 people, in some parts of the riding of Lake Nipigon, and if you do not have the visit of a doctor once a year, one would not be telling the truth if one suggested our system is the best in the world or second to none. These are facts. They have to be acquiesced in. There is not a week, and I think that is the top end, maybe it is three or four days, maximum, without my receiving some correspondence—I am sure the same applies to all northern members—regarding the health system in Ontario. We certainly do not have access to the facilities that are taken for granted elsewhere. If we did, our native population, which forms 18 per cent of the riding of Lake Nipigon, would not have—

**Mr. McLean:** On a point of order, Mr. Chairman: We now have a member who wants to get up and make a statement and ask questions. The point is that I am waiting for answers to the questions I have asked. I believe it is only fair that the minister have the opportunity to answer the questions I asked with regard to nursing and the problems with nursing in the province and all those things, and the other questions that I have on the record. I think it is fair I should have an answer to them now.

**Mr. Pouliot:** Mr. Chairman, you will recall that when the minister so gracefully asked me if I had any questions, I respectfully declined in view

of the dialogue that was going on between my friend from the third party and the honourable minister. It was only after having assumed, like you, Mr. Chairman, that the process had taken place that I stood legitimately at my place to participate in the debate, and I was recognized in doing so.

**Mr. Chairman:** It would have appeared that the dialogue was over, at least in the beginning. Does the minister feel she wants to complete answering the question?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** I was answering the questions from the member. I believed that the member for Lake Nipigon was relating to the discussion we were having on haemodialysis. I thought his question might have related to that because I have more information on dialysis services in the province. I was answering the member.

**Mr. Chairman:** If the member for Lake Nipigon is going to start another topic, maybe you should complete answering the question from the member for Simcoe East (Mr. McLean) in that case.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** I think it is important for us to take a few minutes and really understand dialysis services in the province when we talk about our goal to have services provided as close to home as possible. We acknowledge that the new technologies are allowing us to provide services in many different ways, but there are two kinds of dialysis. I would like to make sure that the members of this House understand the advances in medical care by giving them a full and complete answer on these very important services. As well, I will be pleased to answer the member regarding the questions he has on Orillia Soldiers' Memorial Hospital as well as the Oak Ridge facility.

There are two kinds of dialysis. One is haemodialysis and the other is peritoneal dialysis. For those who do not know, dialysis is a process for purifying the blood of a person whose kidneys have failed. As I said, there are two primary methods. Haemodialysis is where a patient is attached to a machine and the blood passes over a semipermeable membrane and the impurities are removed by osmosis. In peritoneal dialysis, a dialysing solution is infused into the patient's abdominal cavity using the peritoneal membrane as the permeable membrane.

As I have said, haemodialysis is provided to inpatients in acute renal failure and to chronic renal disease patients as outpatients in ambulatory centres. Both centres are called in-centre haemodialysis. The patients have to travel to



these ambulatory centres about three times a week for treatment that lasts several hours to maintain optimum independence.

That is a goal we all have. We know people want to be able to be in their communities for as long as possible and maintain the highest level of independence that is possible. To encourage this, people often go on to home dialysis, where a dialysis machine is placed in the home and the patient and a support person are trained to carry out the procedure. In selected cases, home helpers are provided to support the patients in their homes.

**1640**

Some patients can do their own haemodialysis with some support and assistance, but not everyone is able to do that. As I mentioned, we have an assisted self-care dialysis centre that can provide such support. There are regional self-care dialysis centres existing today in Hamilton, London and North York.

Peritoneal dialysis is usually carried out by an ambulatory patient at home. Continuous ambulatory peritoneal dialysis takes much longer, but it avoids the trip to the inpatient centre program and is of advantage to patients who cannot manage home haemodialysis. Intermittent peritoneal dialysis is usually done in hospital and the patient attends the centre two times a week for a 20-hour dialysis session.

I am not going to go on at any great length about the specific programs, except to say that more nephrologists—those are physicians who specialize and oversee the care of patients who have kidney problems—are choosing to practise in community hospitals. Dialysis services have begun to expand to these facilities. The Credit Valley Hospital in Mississauga operates an in-centre dialysis unit, as do Kitchener-Waterloo Hospital, Hotel Dieu Hospital in St. Catharines, Grace Hospital in Windsor, Belleville General Hospital, North Bay Civic Hospital, Plummer Memorial Public Hospital in Sault Ste. Marie and McKellar General Hospital in Thunder Bay.

Toronto General Hospital also operates a satellite centre program, which I know is of interest to the member from Simcoe East, at the Orillia hospital, and satellites of the London program operate in Sarnia and Hanover. These programs make it easier for patients to receive services much closer to home.

I think everybody understands how difficult it is and that there is great empathy and understanding for patients having to travel great distances three times a week to receive dialysis. However, the nephrologists caution that the provision of

in-centre dialysis may encourage patients to come off home dialysis, which would be a retrograde step. It is noted that there are proportionately more people on home dialysis in the areas outside Metropolitan Toronto. We take all of this into consideration as we do our planning.

I want to talk about the planning for these services. The Metropolitan Toronto district health council has produced two detailed reports on end-stage renal disease that present a plan for dialysis clinics surveying the metropolitan and surrounding communities. Other district health councils have completed or are conducting studies of dialysis services.

In 1987, the minister's advisory committee on end-stage renal dialysis was established under the chairmanship of Dr. David Levine at the Ottawa General Hospital to provide a provincial perspective on dialysis planning and issues.

**Mr. Pouliot:** Bring back Murray! I never thought I'd say that.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** No, just a minute.

The dialysis planning responsibility has now been assigned to the district health councils. That is consistent with the overall mandate for health service planning and what I see as a very important role of the district health councils. I think it is important to know that the Simcoe district health council has offered to include York region, which does not have a district health council, in its review. It is good to know that district health councils are available to help other regions that do not have councils to do some planning.

I know they are hoping to have all this information brought together within the ministry so that, as I said, we can look at the province's needs as a provincial program, recognizing the opportunity that changing medical technology offers us as we look at moving services that are presently only available in urban areas and reallocating the resources to other areas and parts of the province, where we can see that the ministry is responding to the changing needs of our society.

The Ministry of Health, it should be noted, announced \$5.5 million in expansion of dialysis services in June 1988. That was the expansion I referred to earlier to the member. There have been a number of recent initiatives since 1984 because we know that dialysis services are of such importance to the people of this province. There was increased operational funding to hospitals for renal failure programs. That was in



proportion to the growing volume of dialysis patients.

We improved the expansion of the multiple organ retrieval and exchange program, often referred to as MORE, to increase the number of kidney and other vital organ transplants. We know that kidney transplants are a very effective way of helping people with kidney disease.

We approved 22 additional haemodialysis stations and three peritoneal dialysis stations. We approved the establishment of 10 stations of assisted self-care haemodialysis. There was the one I mentioned, which I attended the opening for in North York.

In June 1988, we announced expansion not only in Toronto but in Ottawa and Sault Ste. Marie. This expansion includes a further 31 additional haemodialysis stations, additional operating funding and capital for new equipment and renovations where required. In 1988-89, we expect the additional funding to be about \$5.46 million. As well, the ministry provided funding to Toronto hospitals to enable them to provide three-shift service to enhance accessibility and make dialysis available at times more convenient to the patient.

I am pleased to have the opportunity to let the member know of our commitment to a province-wide haemodialysis and peritoneal dialysis service. I know of his interest and the interest of the members of the House that we use technology most effectively. This is one example of how we can do that.

The member raised the question of Orillia Soldiers Memorial, which is in his constituency. The response I would like to give him today is very similar to the one I gave him in the House previously. I am aware that the hospital has had some approvals from the ministry and that it is discussing right now some other alternatives and options with ministry officials. At the present time, as he knows, the ministry is reviewing capital projects. We are also looking at the capital planning process. There have been a number of personnel changes within the ministry. I want to tell him that I think the discussions which are going on are very appropriate as we make sure we are planning for the year 2000.

I had this discussion with some of the regional municipality councillors from Simcoe county so that we could talk about the need for regional planning and appropriate planning. We know there is much planning activity going on in that region. We know that plans are under way in Barrie and in Orillia. We know that Colling-

wood, Alliston and Midland all have plans they would like to discuss.

I believe that in Simcoe county we have an opportunity, as we review our plans, to make sure we are using our capital planning dollars in a way that is not only fiscally responsible, but will result in appropriate care for the people of that county, not only for the immediate future but for the year 2000 and beyond.

The member also raised the discussions on the Oak Ridge facility. With his permission, I think that leads us into a discussion of mental health services in the province. I thought today might be appropriate since both the critics—the critic for the official opposition, who is here in the House today, and I believe the critic for the third party—talked about and asked about our mental health services.

**1650**

The planning of mental health programs in the province is something which I think warrants some considerable time and attention during estimates and I am pleased to spend the next little while talking about community mental health planning, with discussion of Oak Ridge and Penetanguishene in that context, if that would be satisfactory to the members of the House.

In regard to the Oak Ridge facility, as I mentioned to the member—

**Mr. Pouliot:** On a point of order, Mr. Chairman: I respectfully ask the minister to diligently answer the question. What we have here is a systematic and deliberate session in verbiage in order to kill the clock. I think the questions have been answered to some degree but the relevance left us some time ago. I have some relevant matters on behalf of my constituents up north which I would like to voice to the minister and I am anxious to do so.

**Mr. Chairman:** That is not a point of order. The minister may proceed.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In fact, numerous questions have been asked in the House and I will be—

**Mr. Breagh:** On a point of order, Mr. Chairman: Though we generally do take some liberties with the procedures during estimates, I heard some members ask questions; it is quite appropriate for the minister to answer at length if she wants but it should come somewhere close to the question that was originally asked.

I am happy that the minister wants to talk about mental health. There are many of us who would like to join in that conversation but there are other members who want to ask more specific ques-



tions. I believe we have traditionally yielded the floor to members who have a specific matter in their riding or in general across Ontario. I think it would be a little more appropriate if the member for Lake Nipigon could get his question in now; then, if there is time at the end, certainly we are all anxious to hear the minister's briefing notes on mental health in Ontario, and we will, but maybe we could allow the member to ask his question first.

**Mr. Chairman:** Exactly, because— Madam Minister?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** To respond, both of the Health critics have put many questions on the record to which I would like to have an opportunity to respond. I would seek advice from the chairman as to what would be the appropriate time for me to respond to those questions.

As well, the member opposite has posed numerous questions, some relating to questions which have already been posed by both Health critics and which may, in fact, prompt supplementary questions from other members of this House. I stand ready to discuss these at length if it is the wish of the members of the House, or to be as brief as I can or to provide them with answers to what might be considered Orders and Notices questions, because I believe this is the time when we have an opportunity to discuss in depth the many issues facing health care in Ontario.

**Mr. McLean:** I think the questions I posed are excellent questions and the minister is doing her best to provide the answers. There are only about two more questions she has to answer and I think she should continue, because she will never get any better questions.

Interjections.

**Mr. Chairman:** Order, please.

Because we have a tradition of flexibility in committee—

**Mr. Pouliot:** I want answers to my questions.

**Mr. Chairman:** Order, please. I am trying to give an explanation here.

Because we have been flexible in the past, I am quite ready to accommodate any arrangements which all three parties want to make. I, as chairman, am trying to keep tabs to make sure that all three parties get an equal chance to ask questions and give answers. So far I look at the balance of time and see no reason for alarm, but if the minister wants to complete, then the member wants to ask a question afterwards, and if there is a series of short questions, maybe you can give short answers; but I am flexible. The minister may continue.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** Regarding the question of the status of the redevelopment of the facility at Oak Ridge, this matter was raised by the Health critic of the official opposition and has been raised again by the member for Simcoe East and I am pleased to provide a response.

I have stated very clearly that within the provincial psychiatric hospital system, the redevelopment of Oak Ridge is my first priority. The ministry supports the location of Midland-Penetanguishene as the continued location of the Oak Ridge facility. That is for the interest of the member for Simcoe East and I think that will be of interest to his constituents. It also allows us to get on with planning. He is well aware that the new recreational facility will be opening soon on that site and I believe that is an important facility. In fact, when I was Minister of Government Services, I was involved in the planning for that important recreational facility on that site as well.

The trailer complex connected to Oak Ridge was established this spring and it now houses interview rooms, group rooms, an assessment lab, office space, a library and a classroom, as well as an occupational therapy clinic that has opened at Oak Ridge.

I am sure that both he and the Health critic for the official opposition are aware that I have visited Oak Ridge. After a visit there, you know the reason why I have said it is our number one priority. We know that the planning is going to take some time and so, as an interim, we have said, and I have said very clearly, that the refurbishment that has been going on should continue until such time as we are ready to put the shovel in the ground, because the facility is not one which is viewed with pride within the psychiatric system in this province.

He should note that office renovations as well, which are included with the interview rooms, are in progress in all of the wards. Ward 5 renovations are expected to begin within the next couple of months and initial planning has begun for the renovation of ward 8. I think this is very appropriate even as we plan for a new facility. The sod turning is taking place November 28 for the activity complex on the Oak Ridge grounds.

For those who do not know what Oak Ridge is, I think it is important for us to let the people of this province know that Oak Ridge is the only male maximum security treatment facility in the province, and I know that the critic for the official opposition would suggest that the word "treatment" in that sentence is of concern.



The facility is much like a prison. It includes heavily barred doors and windows. Much of the facility does not meet today's building codes, and for safety reasons, extensive repairs and upgrading are required on an ongoing basis and will be done.

The Hucker report, which I believe was referred to by the critic for the official opposition, was submitted in December 1985 and an implementation process has begun and is under way. Several program changes have already been introduced. The facility is moving away from simply custodial care towards a more therapeutic orientation. Changes over the past two years have been overseen by an implementation steering committee, and I will say in this House that there is much to be done.

**Mr. Chairman:** Is the member satisfied? Can we proceed with the next member?

**Mr. McLean:** The only question that has been left is with regards to the lotteries and hospital construction. Perhaps the minister could clarify if her ministry does plan on providing funds out of Lottario for hospital capital.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** As the member noted in his original question, the Treasurer has submitted a bill which will permit hospital operating funds to be funded by lottery profits. I believe that is very appropriate, and in fact, many of the letters and correspondence that I have received over the past year from the people of this province say that they believe that is very appropriate. At the present time, under the Public Hospitals Act the ministry funds on the basis of two thirds-one third for most municipalities and communities and a special funding arrangement for some of the smaller communities in the north which allows for a five sixths-one sixth participation.

I believe that community participation is extremely important in the planning of our facilities across the province and I believe that participation on the capital side is most appropriate. I have said this very, very clearly. It is one of the reasons that regional capital planning becomes extremely important, because that gives us an opportunity to see what the capacity within the community is to share, in its one third contribution, particularly where you have many communities, as the member for Simcoe East has, all of which would like to talk about capital planning for the future.

1700

One of the concerns I have when we talk about capital planning is that within our existing process right now, we tend not to look at the

impact on our operating expenses until the end of the process. When I have talked about looking at our capital planning process, I think it is important for communities that we acknowledge at the beginning of the process what our expectations are going to be on the operating implications at the end of that process. It is particularly important because we have seen a trend in past years, even when we are providing replacement facilities to serve the same population base, for the operating costs to significantly increase.

I think we are missing an opportunity to be both innovative and creative, to use technologies to help us do the same for less, or at least the same provision of services for the same operating dollars. I am looking at our capital planning process to give us that opportunity to make sure that communities understand the parameters for capital planning early on in the capital planning process so we do not end up with the kind of misunderstanding which sometimes has occurred through the capital planning process.

The member knows but perhaps some of the newer members may not be aware that the way the process of resource allocation works right now in government is that the Treasurer (Mr. R. F. Nixon) allocates to the ministry, in this case the Ministry of Health, a budget for the year based on what we are talking about now, that is, all of the vote items. One of those vote items is capital. As the Treasurer, from all the sources of revenue in the province, makes a determination on what the total provincial capital budget is going to be, an allocation is given to the ministry based on its presentation through the capital planning process and the allocation process to allow the Treasurer, in the wisdom of the Treasury and the government, to determine how much in the way of capital dollars will be available to the ministry.

It is my hope that when we look at a planning process which is rational, which acknowledges that there is much infrastructure renewal required around the province, we will be able to take into account the impact on our operating so we will be able to convince the Treasurer that we can be innovative and creative, that we can provide new facilities at the same cost or less cost than we are spending today due to facilities being outdated, and that by being as innovative and creative as we can be, we will be able to accelerate our planning for infrastructure renewal across the province; recognizing that our goal is always to make sure we provide not necessarily just the bricks and mortar, because while that is very nice, we know



that what is really important is the quality of care and the effect of quality care which is provided not only in our facilities but also now, given the changes in technology, in community-based services in many different ways.

I appreciate the opportunity to answer questions on capital planning, and the Treasurer has already stated that he believes lottery funds are very appropriate to be used for the funding of hospital operating.

**Mr. McLean:** I will leave the floor now to some other members. I still have some questions that are not answered, but I will not take any more time at the present.

**Mr. Pouliot:** I would like to thank the member for Simcoe East for understanding that other people also have questions. He was privileged by a very detailed answer by the minister, and I hope to be extended the same meticulous benefit.

The minister will be aware that one of the problems or dilemmas we face up north is both attracting and retaining health service or specialists of pretty well any description. For instance, there is a shortage in most communities of physiotherapists, doctors, dentists, child psychologists—I think we have one for 230,000 people as the base of population in northwestern Ontario; Dr. Nugent—psychologists, speech pathologists, nurses. The list is almost endless. Again, I cannot refer to this as a second-to-none or world-class system. The best system in the world does not allow shortages in every field of endeavour in health matters. It is just so contradictory; you do not do that.

We still spend 90 per cent of our effort erecting commissions or identifying problems, but we do not have much of a sense of vision when it comes to the north; planning is not our forte.

Consequently, and more important, the result is that the people of the north are left holding the bag. I do not envy the minister's position; not in the least. I know the minister to be dedicated. She must feel from time to time that it never stops. If she is like me, she had never heard of the Ontario Friends of Schizophrenics 15 years ago, but now they want services. Mental health problems have to be addressed. And the list goes on and on.

She did mention, rightly so, that coupled with some of those realities, we have an ageing population. Some of us are getting like old cars and we need to go to the repair shop more often; either we go as inpatients or outpatients. In terms of the north, we are all outpatients, because we do not have the kind of services other people take for granted. At least half the communities I represent do not have a dentist; they do not have a

general practitioner. They do not even have what you could refer to as an outpost. But what the minister does is establish another study, another committee to help address the shortage of medical specialists up north.

We have been studying through Dr. Copeman, the underserved area programs up north. That was a welcome step and was really well planned. The thing is that it does not suffice. It begins to do so, but it does not quite suffice to fill our needs. Yet when we ask the minister, "Do we have a shortage of doctors in Ontario?" the minister says, "Yes, we do have a shortage of doctors in the northern part of Ontario." "Well, Minister, do we have enough doctors in Ontario?" "Yes, but you see, member from Lake Nipigon and other northern members, what we have is a distribution problem. Mississauga has too many and Lake Nipigon does not have any."

The minister will be aware of the proposal from Polish doctors, for instance. They fulfilled all the criteria needed; their offer was to come and practise in the north on a contract basis. The minister is aware of that. That would have helped to solve the dilemma.

The minister is saying no; she is shaking her head. If I do not have any doctors and one comes in, that solves my problem. I do not know what kind of mathematics she uses.

Of course, the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario controls this to a large degree—In fact, it has been said it is the largest cartel ever invented by man in terms of providing and guiding essential services. In the world of monopolies and cartels, they wield a big stick indeed.

#### 1710

The fact remains that in her first-class, world-class, second-to-none system—whatever attributes and fanfare she may give to the health system in Ontario—in the other Ontario, in northern Ontario, we need innovative, imaginative methods that will work. Every time a proposal comes from this side of the House, almost automatically the proposal gets turned down. If I ask the minister, "Is it not a good idea to institute a medical school in northern Ontario?" I get a no, because the minister does not want to acquiesce that there is a need to do so.

It is done in northern Minnesota and it is done in Finland and Sweden. Two years of medical school to expose medical students to the needs of the north and to help promote our special regions of Ontario is not asking for too much. That would help. That would be a step in the right direction to help solve the problems of the north. One of the



questions I have for the minister is whether she will give the proposal of establishing a medical school, for instance, at Lakehead University, her serious consideration.

Another one I have is, since it does cost the taxpayers of Ontario over \$250,000 to bring one medical student to graduation—for every one of those fine people who will later on provide an essential service, we spend at least \$250,000, probably more, but at least that, of taxpayers' money—will the minister consider enacting legislation to say to the people, "Look. You have taken so much out of the system. The taxpayers have paid for your education, and we do not want to restrict your mobility, but you will have to serve for a period of two or three years in northern Ontario. We are not sending you to Timbuktu. Go there and maybe you will get to like it but, more important, the people of the north will be given insurance."

Why is it that in a province like Ontario, realizing the needs, again, of remote northern Ontario, we do not have any paramedics, those foot soldiers who provide such an essential service elsewhere? Why is it that we do not have any such thing? Is it because the college tells the minister: "Look. We want to keep our hand on the system. Therefore, you must not train people beyond a certain level"? Why is it that if I need my ears flushed, I have to travel 250 miles if there is no doctor in attendance? The nurse will not do it. She cannot put me on a scale. It has to be checked by a doctor. Either I go to Sault Ste. Marie 265 miles away or I go to Thunder Bay. It is very difficult.

I chaired a series of meetings in June 1988, when fully 52 groups came in front of our task force and not only identified the problems and the shortcomings in the health delivery system in the north but, just as important, came up with workable and positive alternatives. Why is a blind person, from either Dryden or Kenora, referred to an ophthalmologist in Winnipeg because it is a lot closer than Thunder Bay?

**Mr. Haggerty:** Eighty miles.

**Mr. Pouliot:** Eighty miles. I thank the member.

That blind person applies, under the escort provision, for northern travel assistance. He is 38 years of age; has never taken the plane in his life; brings someone with him; does not know what a plane looks like or the airport; has never been to Winnipeg; makes the application to get the escort fee and does not get the escort fee. Why not? Because he is over 18 years of age so he does not qualify. Ironically, a true story.

A week later, a young man, who I assure members weighs 20 pounds more than I do and is taller than I am, has a sprained ankle and goes a longer distance to Thunder Bay to get X-rayed. He is 17 years of age and he brings his buddy too, with the car. There is nothing wrong with that. He is less than 18 years of age.

My blind constituent does not get escort service because he is over 18. He is blind but he can manage on his own, while the other young chap is 17 years of age and has a sprained ankle, and goes with his buddy. They both go to Thunder Bay together. They both get paid. I do not think it makes sense. Maybe the minister will say. I ask her why this kind of atrocity is allowed to happen.

A person with a brain tumour as big as a small fist is on a three-month waiting list in Thunder Bay to go to the scanner. A person is rushed to the Mayo Clinic in Rochester. They operate immediately and save the person's life. That is a health system we can all be proud of, a health system second to none, a health system which is first class, a health system or the lack of it that permits our first Canadians who are also automatically our first Ontarians, our native population, to live 10 years less than the minister and I on average.

As the minister mentioned, as we approach or enter the year of Our Lord 2000, a new millennium—we could go back a couple of hundred years, because there is no relationship between what the minister has described so accurately and what is needed up north—all this to say, again, I know her job is difficult. Today, perhaps more so by virtue of the results of the federal election last night, we need the assurance and reassurance that the concept of universality as it applies to the Ontario health insurance plan will be maintained. We certainly, as members of the opposition, acquiesced.

We call it one of the cornerstones of our social programs in Canada and in Ontario. I know that the minister must feel sometimes that this never stops. She must be concerned about her ability to fund the system. She knows very well, better than I do, and can certainly put it more accurately than I could ever imagine or dream of, that when you look at the rate of inflation over the past three years and when you look at the increase in expenditures of her ministry, you can almost multiply by three, or close to it.

For instance, if the rate of inflation is around four per cent, one can expect that her proposals will come in at around 12 per cent. Oh, she has problems. Nurses wish not only to have respect; they also want us to put it in the pay envelopes.



We have a quite drastic shortage and we live in a specialized world. More and more people are asking for services, and the times are good: enjoy, enjoy. More and more money is needed to meet the demands, legitimate demands. We are talking about the most essential of basic services, and the minister realizes that. That is why it costs more than one third of the provincial revenues.

I would like to know only philosophically, but just philosophically, when the going gets a little rough, when the merry-go-round stops or we have to jump off because there is a correction in our economy, will the minister stand at her post in this House and reassure us then that there will be no user's fee and that she will work with the same diligence to meet the dire needs of the people of the north?

1720

I do not wish to appear to sound deliberately negative. We do not do that. Our job, our duty, our mandate is to address the legitimate concerns of the people who live in our special part of Ontario. We do not wish that anyone would have to live the anxiety that takes place, not only from time to time in some community but that everyone can relate to, for no one is immune up north.

We have shared the belief that something is being done; there is just no question about that. We know that the heart is in the right place and there is a fistful of dollars from time to time. What we do not have is the assurance that systematically—deliberately, yes, of course, but systematically—the sense of vision, the planning that has been so badly lacking has been the order of the day.

We have not had it in economic development. It is starting to penetrate. People have vision; they believe. They plan because they are responsible, and the promotion comes from those two. It is the rationale, it is the ensemble; and the consequence is that it makes the north eternal because it develops more and you have more people and more people will render more services.

Those are some of the questions I had. We do not expect the Taj Mahals that we find in sophisticated metropolitan centres. Sometimes when I come to Toronto, I am somewhat appalled to see that kind of sophistication. We are very simple, not a very complicated species up north, but I can assure the minister that we notice every little thing. No one appreciates a service more. No ifs or buts. When the ministry does something well, collectively and individually we stand up and we applaud. We do not play politics up there.

We do not know how. Sincerity—we are straightforward.

Interjections.

**Mr. Carrothers:** Gilles can laugh.

**Mr. Pouliot:** No, no, the member can laugh. Mr. Chairman, I think standing order 24(b) gives you the authority to cap the bottles there. They keep interrupting. Those were words of wisdom, legitimate complaints of people. The members of the House should avail themselves of the opportunity, they live in a different world, as opposed to laughing and ridiculing honourable members when they try to voice the legitimate grievances of their people. My, my. I would never, never attempt to interject in this House when an honourable member is on his feet talking.

We certainly will look forward to the minister's commitment. I know that I share with my good friend the Minister of Northern Development (Mr. Fontaine) many, many conversations. We are unanimous in our desire to see more and improved services.

May we collectively, regardless of party affiliation, look forward in the very near future to a specific timetable? We are patient; we know about capital expenditure; it cannot all be done in one day. No problem; take some time; but I want to believe when I ask the minister a question that she really has given it all the sincerity that it deserves. I do not want to blow the credibility of the people of the north in that she says, yes, it will be done and this is how we will do it, in years, step by step, a phased approach.

I hope some of those questions will be answered.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** If it is agreeable to the members of the House, the Health critic for the third party also raised a number of northern health issues. If I could, I would like to respond briefly to some of the issues raised by the member for Lake Nipigon (Mr. Pouliot). Many of those issues lead us directly into a discussion of health care professional manpower and, specifically, the issues of physician manpower, nursing manpower and allied health professions, as they relate to both education and educational opportunities.

I would like to suggest with the agreement of the House that, given the time that is available, we have a full discussion on health professional manpower, physician manpower and nursing manpower the next time we meet during estimates and be prepared to have that discussion, so I can fully inform all of the members. But I would like today to address some of the northern issues.



As the member for Lake Nipigon knows, I travelled this summer and throughout this past year through some of the more remote regions of northern Ontario, so that I could fully appreciate and understand at first hand the special challenges that northern living requires, as far as responsiveness is concerned.

I visited Pickle Lake; what a lovely and wonderful community it is. I was sorry that the member for Lake Nipigon was not able to be there on the day that I was there. But in fact I met some wonderful people delivering very excellent quality care to the people in Pickle Lake.

I visited Red Lake. I spent some time in Kenora, flying into some of the smaller communities. I would like to tell the member that I really have an understanding of the challenges that northern Ontario and the small communities of the north present to us.

I am proud of the commitment that this government made in our northern travel grant program. Let me also share with him some of what I heard, as we review this program. I heard from some of the providers of care that, while this program is extremely important to the people of the north in helping them to access centres of specialization—because it is for specialization that they are travelling, I would say, not for the sprained ankle. To be fair to the people of the north, they know that the travel grant program is there to help them access specialized services and it is very important to them.

Physicians are saying to me that, at the same time that is happening, it is making it more difficult to attract physicians to the north, if people are going to leave for the services. So we have to look at making sure that any program we have is always re-evaluated, to make sure that it does not interfere with our priority of attracting specialized services to the north.

We have the underserved area program, which has been functioning and functioning quite well. I have always said that I will give credit where it is due. We know that the underserved area program was initiated by the previous government in 1969. Since that date, over 800 physicians have been placed in designated underserved areas of Ontario. The underserved area program was started because of the need to attract physicians to northern Ontario. Between 1971 and 1976 some areas of southern Ontario were also designated as underserved.

As of April 1, 1988, there were 354 family physicians, 109 specialists and 92 psychiatrists in provincial psychiatric hospitals receiving underserved area incentive grants who are still

in practice in the same area after receiving the grant. I will not go through the whole list of where they are. They are available as an Orders and Notices question, if anyone is interested.

Often the question of retention is raised. Since this is an ongoing program, the question of how long is really very difficult to assess. The recent estimate is that there is an average of some seven years after the four-year grant incentive period for physicians to remain in the north. After travelling in the north this summer, I think that it is because to live in northern Ontario is to love northern Ontario and to understand the unique and special lifestyle that it offers.

As we look at the educational opportunities in this province for the students, the medical students particularly, we know that all five of the health science centres and medical schools are now looking at expanding the opportunities for students to practise in the north so that they will be interested in serving in the north.

1730

The member for Lake Nipigon talked about legislating. I have to tell him that my response to that is that I really believe physicians should be able to seek out opportunities to practise in the rural and remote regions of the province because of the experience and opportunity it provides. I think that by expanding the educational opportunities, we can encourage that kind of opportunity to be made available.

One of the concerns I have is that in any change of program, we recognize the special needs of northern Ontario and not look simply to some of the simplistic answers and responses we sometimes hear, such as the building of a medical school. In fact, when we talk about physician manpower, we know we do not need another medical school to be established in this province in any location or in any language. I discussed this when I was in Sudbury.

What we need is for the five existing medical schools in this province to train for the needs of Ontario. When I met recently with the deans of our medical schools I asked them, if it was not their responsibility to train for the needs of Ontario, not only for our centres of specialization, our tertiary care teaching hospitals and our community hospitals in our urban centres but also to train people for the needs of northern and rural Ontario, then whose responsibility was that? I believe the deans of the medical schools acknowledged they have a responsibility to train for the needs of Ontario and will be modifying their programs appropriately.



I believe the discussions that are ongoing about expansion of the family practice or the family physician to allow for a second year, as has already occurred in Quebec and I believe in Alberta, will allow additional educational opportunities for medical students to spend some time in our rural and northern locations.

One of the concerns expressed to me by the physicians I spoke to who are practising in the more remote and rural regions was that technology is having an impact in the training of physicians. The requirement of what they call a critical mass of numbers of physicians from the profession is making it extremely difficult today, given the advances in technology, for physicians, particularly young physicians, trained in our centres to practise in a single, remote area.

This offers a very special challenge as we look at how to meet the needs. How do we make sure our vision of equity in access to effective quality health care, the very best we can afford as close to home as possible, acknowledges the changes in technology, where physicians are saying that the one-person doctor in town who did everything for everybody really does not exist any more today because of the specialization, the subspecialization and even the changes in family practice?

How do we modify our educational training to respond to that change of technology and yet respond to the needs of our more remote communities? How do we modify our travel grant program so it achieves that goal, which is to give the people of the north access to highly specialized care that will be—it is today and will be in the future—impossible to provide in every small community because that would not be quality care?

We know quality care requires a certain volume of services before you have the level of expertise the communities deserve. In fact, as we look at what are appropriate standards, whether they are numbers of procedures that are provided or how that care is provided, we have to realize our system has primary care, secondary care and tertiary care.

Primary care is the place where one would hope that one would also have the opportunity for health promotion and disease prevention strategies. Secondary care is the more complicated specialization. Tertiary care really does require the centre of specialization.

As we look at how we provide services not only to the north but also to rural communities, we must acknowledge that there are many programs in place today to respond to the special

needs of the north, but given these challenges we face and the vision we have, we must always be willing to review those programs in light of new information and new opportunities, to be both innovative and creative in providing services to those communities.

I think there are a number of initiatives under way that will allow us to respond. As I mentioned, we are reviewing the medical education program for family practitioners right now and we are under discussion on that score. We are also, at the present time, looking at the Independent Health Facilities Act, Bill 147, which I think will give us another opportunity to respond appropriately in a planned way to the needs of the northern and more remote communities, because nobody says that an Independent Health Facilities Act must be bricks and mortar. We already have examples of some services that travel. I think it gives us the flexibility to be innovative and creative, and to respond to the needs of our more remote communities.

We have the health professions legislation review. When the member referred to the role played by the providers of service, the professionals, the health professions legislation review really includes considerations around scope of practice: who can do what, the concept of licensed acts. I think that is extremely important and that we will have the opportunity to discuss the proposals of Mr. Schwartz and his review team, which has been ongoing for some five years. I am hoping to have his recommendations before the end of this year so that we can begin the process of consultation and discussion on his recommendations, which may give us some opportunities to do things differently in this province so that we can respond to the needs.

I want to mention a couple of other programs we have in place right now. One is the medical incentive program. This is an incentive for family practitioners to establish practices in designated underserved areas with a tax-free grant of \$40,000 paid over four years. In some areas, as I mentioned in southern Ontario, there is a modified level of financial incentive that is often provided and in that case there is an income-tax-free grant of \$15,000 paid over four years.

Specialists approved by the medical personnel selection committee may receive an income-tax-free incentive grant of \$20,000, or \$40,000 for psychiatrists—we have established psychiatrists as a priority, particularly for the Lakehead; I know that will be of interest to the member for Lake Nipigon. This incentive is paid over a



four-year period. The grant of \$40,000 is provided if they undertake to provide outreach services to small or isolated communities. I think these are quite effective. A travelling specialist program provides services on a part-time basis. Specialists have their travel, accommodation and meal expenses paid by the Ministry of Health and are also eligible for an honorarium of \$300 per day.

Some communities that experience shortages are provided with locum tenens. That is a temporary physician who comes in and is paid during these periods of shortage. They are provided by the ministry. The locums receive \$1,400 to \$1,700 per week, plus travel and accommodation expenses. These locums provide care until a permanent physician is recruited. The number of locums changes and varies from about four to 25. We recognize that the method of providing locums is extremely expensive, but we also recognize it meets a very important need, so we use locums on an interim basis.

1740

There is also the dental incentive program operating in northern Ontario. That provides a financial incentive to dentists to establish and practise in designated underserved areas. The incentives are \$28,000 for northern Ontario and \$14,000 for southern Ontario. They are paid over a four-year period to approved applicants and are also tax free. The program was recently extended to include dental specialists, periodontists only, for the larger northern urban centres.

The incentive is the same for this as the incentive for northern Ontario. Special service support is available for very small communities that cannot provide a practice situation for a full-time private practitioner dentist.

In the north, the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines has been providing assistance on a cost-shared basis to municipalities to help them purchase equipment. I believe the Minister of Northern Development and the programs from Northern Development respond specifically on a priority basis to those identified from northern Ontario. Again, I am very proud of the work that my colleague is doing to help meet the needs of northern Ontario.

There are a number of programs. There is the dental bursary program. I will not give statistics, but I did mention the mobile approach. There is a dental coach program and there are six mobile coaches that now provide preventive and treatment services to preschool and elementary children in the remote school areas of the province. Each coach is staffed by a dentist and a

dental assistant. This is direct service provided by the ministry in six geographic areas, with an itinerary of placement sites in each area. In 1987-88, an estimated 2,654 children with 7,574 patient visits were treated.

I think it is important for us to see that we are, to this point in time, being creative in trying to provide services to remote regions. With the change in medical technology, I believe there are opportunities that are provided to us today to provide services that in the past could only be provided traditionally in hospital. I believe we have to seek out and try out these services on a pilot basis to make sure they are effective.

The list goes on. There is the northwestern health unit treatment program, the Porcupine health unit treatment program, a mobile dental clinic for the disabled. Then there is a whole program for rehabilitation specialists, including bursary programs, incentive grant programs for physiotherapists, and I could go on. I would be happy to give the member a full and complete list, if he wishes, an Orders and Notices response.

I think one of the things we must remember when we are looking at meeting the special needs of the north—I prefer to use the term “human resource planning,” but in fact the term everyone tends to use is “manpower planning”—is that anything we do in the way of human resource planning, manpower planning, across the whole province must acknowledge that the northern and the more remote and rural communities have special needs and are entitled to the understanding and also to the attention of the ministry.

I want to assure the member that they have my attention and that I do understand, having travelled across this province from the extreme north—I was up in Attawapiskat and you cannot get too much further north. I understand Peawanuck is the only place I missed in the extreme north. I understand that there are some communities north of Pickle Lake. I would like to visit them in the future as well.

I do understand and I know that as we do our planning for the future, that the northern health travel grant program which has been so important to the people of the north in the past will continue to play an important role in the future as we give them that access to the services that they require in a centre of specialization, recognizing that it is not always possible to provide every service in every community for a number of reasons.

One in particular, as I mentioned earlier, is the fact that the technologies available today and the volumes of service delivery required to make



sure you have quality care, suggest that in the name of quality and access to effective quality services, it is better for the people to travel a little bit to get that service, which they can be assured is quality care.

**Mr. Pouliot:** The minister's speech as an answer, if not her commitment, is almost as long as the riding of Lake Nipigon. I, too, would like to join the member for Carleton East (Mr. Morin) for he has been to Fort Severn, which is the most northern community in Ontario. The minister has been to Attawapiskat. I can relate to that. For instance, as I am standing here today, I am closer to Miami, Florida than to some parts of the riding of Lake Nipigon.

She is quite right—I live in Manitouwadge which is in Objibway legend. The translation is, "cave of the great spirit." I travel some 600 miles to Pickle Lake and then we use Pickle Lake as a base to visit the second part of the riding of Lake Nipigon. She is right. We measure things on a different scale. Our mileage is greater and our services are lesser.

Interjection

**Mr. Pouliot:** I heard the words, "by canoe." Maybe someone will say by dog team, running out of steam and so on. I say to the minister that I do not find that orphanage fires are very funny.

I want to commend her and her staff. They seem to have prepared answers, and relevant answers, identifying problems. They do so at great length. I know she appreciates those people by and large. The great majority work very hard and do not complain. The more time we spend around here, we know that they are different from the proverbial faceless bureaucrats. They bring forth a human dimension and give the minister an opportunity, with respect, to spend 90 per cent of her time identifying the problem.

Interjection.

**Mr. Pouliot:** Not so quick. While we do appreciate all the research and good recommendations, we wish to see more relevancy to our proposals.

The minister has clout. By the stroke of a pen, as the Minister of Health, in a province of some 9.4 million people, with a budget—I do not know—\$13 billion, \$14 billion when all is counted, she is a powerful person. She can do things. So when those doctors say, "No, we won't go past Steeles Avenue or past Parry Sound," the minister should tell them, "Look, my friend from Lake Nipigon and the hardworking people who are sending \$13 billion of

natural resources and their hard-earned taxes to the south want you to start paying your dues."

The minister could do that. She is not restricting mobility or endangering democracy. She is showing leadership when she does that. She is saving lives when she does that. She is dealing with real problems. She has a sense of vision and means what she says. As a politician, she delivers.

So she too can join us in looking to the future with confidence. She does not want to miss opportunities. Napoleon Bonaparte often mentioned, and history will attest, that he knew to some extent what he was talking about. When opportunity passes, one seizes it. Those are good tactics if you are a politician. 1750

If you are a statesperson, it makes people believe. It makes people look up and say: "Yes, the Minister of Health cares about people. The Minister of Health brings forward a human dimension. The Minister of Health has a focused statement, 'I will do this because of people.' The Minister of Health wants to share. The Minister of Health knows that life is short. The Minister of Health knows that it is important to put more into the system than what we take out." We will be waiting for some answers.

In conclusion, I wish to thank the government whip for having made sure that the attendance is at a record high for being almost five to six.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** The member did ask one question at the end that I would like to respond to.

**Mr. McCague:** He did not. You answered one.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** He did in his opening question. I would like to give him a direct response. He asked if I would stand in my place and discuss user fees as I did in the opening statement. He asked whether, as we are facing these three enormous, compelling forces for change—technological advance, our ageing population and the economic reality—I would make a statement on user fees? I want to tell him I believe that user fees are inappropriate and unacceptable as a method for deterring inappropriate use of the system. We have in place right now a system of copayment for chronic care. I believe there may be other appropriate copayment opportunities which are not a deterrent to appropriate services.

I think that is extremely important when we talk about the Canada Health Act, the foundation of our system, which we have built over the past 20 years. I want to assure him that I will stand in my place and say to the people of this province that I will do what I can as long as I am a minister of this House. This government stands commit-

ted to protection of that which we have achieved, which says there is not a financial barrier in access to effective quality health services. To those who would prescribe either extra billing or user fees as a method of deterring access to appropriate health services by saying that that will only deter access to inappropriate health services, I will stand here today, tomorrow and always and say I disagree with them. I have the studies here today, which I read into the record. Given the enormous challenges that face us, we must together be as creative as we can be to protect that which we have achieved.

I would say to my friend and colleague the member for Simcoe East when he talked about cutting budgets—

**Mr. Laughren:** He didn't.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** He actually did use the term "cutting." I want to tell him that in fact budgets have only increased. Costs have increased. For me, everything that we do in the provision of services, in making sure that every region of this province receives a fair share of available resources should result in effective quality care, protection of the public and the maintenance of all that is good, the preservation of all that is good in our achievement of what I believe and what observers believe to be one of the finest health care systems in the world.

As we criticize, I say in numerous forums that what makes our system so good is that we are so critical of it, that we are always trying to make it better, and so I will stand in my place and say to

the member for Lake Nipigon that as long as I have whatever power is available to me as Minister of Health I will stand in my place and accept good suggestions for how we can improve, how we can enhance quality of care and how we can maintain the glorious achievement of universal, comprehensive medical services, health care, recognizing that today health and health care are far more than simply the treatment of illness.

I have said on a number of occasions, and I believe now during estimates is a good time to remind members, that I have said I believe the Ministry of Health should in fact earn the name Ministry of Health, because today it could be called the Ministry of Illness or the Ministry of Treatment or the Ministry of Institutions. As I stand in my place to say I want to maintain what we have achieved, to make sure that any change we make results in effective quality care for the people of this province, the Ministry of Health should in fact be the Ministry of Health as it focuses more on the establishment of community-based facilities, as it focuses more on health promotion and disease prevention. Those were the three elements which I said a year ago were my priorities, and I want members to know I am making progress.

On motion by Hon. Mrs. Caplan, the committee of supply reported progress.

The House adjourned at 5:57 p.m.



## ANSWER TO QUESTION IN ORDERS AND NOTICES

### RIDEAU VALLEY DISTRICT HEALTH COUNCIL

**112. Mr. Runciman:** Will the Minister of Health inform the House whether or not she feels it is appropriate that organized labour does not have a representative on the Lanark-Leeds-Grenville District Health Council? If yes, why, and if not, will she move as soon as possible to remedy the situation? [Tabled April 20, 1988]

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** The composition of Rideau Valley District Health Council (formerly the Leeds, Lanark, Grenville District Health Council) includes 16 members who represent consumers, providers and members of local government. The target representation on all district health councils is 40 per cent consumers, 40 per cent providers and 20 per cent local government. The consumer representation includes members who do not receive any income from the health care system and are not directly or indirectly involved in the management or delivery of health care services. Consumer positions on council provide the opportunity for members of organized labour to serve on district health councils. Vacancies on council are advertised in the local press.

### RESPONSE TO PETITION

#### RETAIL STORE HOURS

Sessional paper P-7, re Sunday shopping.

**Hon. Mrs. Smith:** The government has concluded that municipalities should have the option to decide retail hours on Sundays and other holidays and has introduced legislation to accomplish this.

The new law contains standard store closing rules for all of Ontario. These standard rules will remain in place unless a municipality decides for its own reasons to alter the law to reflect its own values or needs. It may do this by permitting stores to open or requiring them to close on Sundays and holidays. Municipalities are entitled to make this choice for themselves.

Under amendments to the Employment Standards Act, all retail workers will be able to refuse Sunday work which is, in their view, unreasonable, and the legislation will protect workers against reprisals. Employers and employees will be encouraged to work out co-operative arrangements for Sundays. If no settlement is reached through mediation, the matter will be referred to an independent referee.

The current law has been found to be unenforceable and has been abused by some retailers. The proposed amendments provide a workable, fair and flexible solution to the issue of Sunday and holiday shopping.

**ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS\***  
(130 seats)

First Session, 34th Parliament

**Lieutenant Governor: Hon. Lincoln M. Alexander, PC, QC**

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- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <p>Adams, Peter (Peterborough L)<br/>           Allen, Richard (Hamilton West NDP)<br/>           Ballinger, William G. (Durham-York L)<br/>           Beer, Charles (York North L)<br/>           Black, Kenneth H. (Muskoka-Georgian Bay L)<br/>           Bossy, Maurice L. (Chatham-Kent L)<br/> <b>Bradley, Hon. James J.</b>, Minister of the Environment (St. Catharines L)<br/>           Brandt, Andrew S. (Sarnia PC)<br/>           Breaugh, Michael J. (Oshawa NDP)<br/>           Brown, Michael A. (Algoma-Manitoulin L)<br/>           Bryden, Marion (Beaches-Woodbine NDP)<br/>           Callahan, Robert V. (Brampton South L)<br/>           Campbell, Sterling (Sudbury L)<br/> <b>Caplan, Hon. Elinor</b>, Minister of Health (Oriole L)<br/>           Carrothers, Douglas A. (Oakville South L)<br/>           Charlton, Brian A. (Hamilton Mountain NDP)<br/>           Chiarelli, Robert (Ottawa West L)<br/>           Cleary, John C. (Cornwall L)<br/>           Collins, Shirley (Wentworth East L)<br/> <b>Conway, Hon. Sean G.</b>, Minister of Mines (Renfrew North L)<br/>           Cooke, David R. (Kitchener L)<br/>           Cooke, David S. (Windsor-Riverside NDP)<br/>           Cordiano, Joseph (Lawrence L)<br/>           Cousens, W. Donald (Markham PC)<br/>           Cunningham, Dianne E. (London North PC)<br/>           Cureatz, Sam L. (Durham East PC)<br/> <b>Curling, Hon. Alvin</b>, Minister of Skills Development (Scarborough North L)<br/>           Daigeler, Hans (Nepean L)<br/>           Dietsch, Michael M. (St. Catharines-Brock L)<br/> <b>Eakins, Hon. John F.</b>, Minister of Municipal Affairs (Victoria-Haliburton L)<br/> <b>Edighoffer, Hon. Hugh A.</b>, Speaker (Perth L)<br/>           Elliot, R. Walter (Halton North L)<br/> <b>Elston, Hon. Murray J.</b>, Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet (Bruce L)<br/>           Epp, Herbert A. (Waterloo North L)<br/>           Eves, Ernie L. (Parry Sound PC)<br/>           Farnan, Michael (Cambridge NDP)<br/>           Faubert, Frank (Scarborough-Ellesmere L)<br/>           Fawcett, Joan M. (Northumberland L)<br/>           Ferraro, Rick E. (Guelph L)<br/>           Fleet, David (High Park-Swansea L)</p> | <p><b>Fontaine, Hon. René</b>, Minister of Northern Development (Cochrane North L)<br/> <b>Fulton, Hon. Ed</b>, Minister of Transportation (Scarborough East L)<br/>           Furlong, Allan W. (Durham Centre L)<br/> <b>Grandmaître, Hon. Bernard C.</b>, Minister of Revenue (Ottawa East L)<br/>           Grier, Ruth A. (Etobicoke-Lakeshore NDP)<br/>           Haggerty, Ray (Niagara South L)<br/>           Hampton, Howard (Rainy River NDP)<br/>           Harris, Michael D. (Nipissing PC)<br/>           Hart, Christine E. (York East L)<br/>           Henderson, D. James (Etobicoke-Humber L)<br/> <b>Hošek, Hon. Chaviva</b>, Minister of Housing (Oakwood L)<br/>           Jackson, Cameron (Burlington South PC)<br/>           Johnson, Jack (Wellington PC)<br/>           Johnston, Richard F. (Scarborough West NDP)<br/>           Kanter, Ron (St. Andrew-St. Patrick L)<br/> <b>Kerrio, Hon. Vincent G.</b>, Minister of Natural Resources (Niagara Falls L)<br/>           Keyes, Kenneth A. (Kingston and The Islands L)<br/>           Kormos, Peter (Welland-Thorold NDP)<br/>           Kozyra, Taras B. (Port Arthur L)<br/> <b>Kwinter, Hon. Monte</b>, Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Wilson Heights L)<br/>           Laughren, Floyd (Nickel Belt NDP)<br/>           LeBourdais, Linda (Etobicoke West L)<br/>           Leone, Laureano (Downsview L)<br/>           Lipsett, Ron (Grey L)<br/>           Lupusella, Tony (Dovercourt L)<br/>           MacDonald, Keith (Prince Edward-Lennox L)<br/>           Mackenzie, Bob (Hamilton East NDP)<br/>           Mahoney, Steven W. (Mississauga West L)<br/> <b>Mancini, Hon. Remo</b>, Minister without Portfolio (Essex South L)<br/>           Marland, Margaret (Mississauga South PC)<br/>           Martel, Shelley (Sudbury East NDP)<br/>           Matrondola, Gino (Willowdale L)<br/>           McCague, George R. (Simcoe West PC)<br/>           McClelland, Carman (Brampton North L)<br/>           McGuigan, James F. (Essex-Kent L)<br/>           McGuinty, Dalton J. (Ottawa South L)<br/>           McLean, Allan K. (Simcoe East PC)<br/> <b>McLeod, Hon. Lyn</b>, Minister of Colleges and Universities (Fort William L)<br/>           Miclash, Frank (Kenora L)</p> |
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Miller, Gordon I. (Norfolk L)  
 Morin, Gilles E. (Carleton East L)  
 Morin-Strom, Karl E. (Sault Ste. Marie NDP)  
 Neumann, David E. (Brantford L)  
 Nicholas, Cindy (Scarborough Centre L)  
 Nixon, J. Bradford (York Mills L)  
**Nixon, Hon. Robert F.**, Deputy Premier,  
 Treasurer of Ontario and Minister of Eco-  
 nomics and Minister of Financial Institutions  
 (Brant-Haldimand L)  
**Oddie Munro, Hon. Lily**, Minister of Culture  
 and Communications (Hamilton Centre L)  
 Offer, Steven (Mississauga North L)  
**O'Neil, Hon. Hugh P.**, Minister of Tourism and  
 Recreation (Quinte L)  
 O'Neill, Yvonne (Ottawa-Rideau L)  
 Owen, Bruce (Simcoe Centre L)  
**Patten, Hon. Richard**, Minister of Government  
 Services (Ottawa Centre L)  
 Pelissero, Harry E. (Lincoln L)  
**Peterson, Hon. David R.**, Premier and Presi-  
 dent of the Council and Minister of Inter-  
 governmental Affairs (London Centre L)  
 Philip, Ed (Etobicoke-Rexdale NDP)  
**Phillips, Hon. Gerry**, Minister of Citizenship  
 (Scarborough-Agincourt L)  
 Poirier, Jean, Deputy Speaker and Chairman of  
 the Committees of the Whole House (Prescott  
 and Russell L)  
 Pollock, Jim (Hastings-Peterborough PC)  
 Polsinelli, Claudio (Yorkview L)  
 Poole, Dianne (Eglinton L)  
 Pope, Alan W. (Cochrane South PC)  
 Pouliot, Gilles (Lake Nipigon NDP)  
 Rae, Bob (York South NDP)  
**Ramsay, Hon. David**, Minister of Correctional  
 Services (Timiskaming L)  
 Ray, Michael C., Deputy Chairman of the  
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 Walkerville L)  
 Reville, David (Riverdale NDP)  
 Reycraft, Douglas R. (Middlesex L)

**Riddell, Hon. Jack**, Minister of Agriculture and  
 Food (Huron L)  
 Roberts, Marietta L. D. (Elgin L)  
 Runciman, Robert W. (Leeds-Grenville PC)  
 Ruprecht, Tony (Parkdale L)  
**Scott, Hon. Ian G.**, Attorney General  
 (St. George-St. David L)  
 Smith, David W. (Lambton L)  
**Smith, Hon. E. Joan**, Solicitor General  
 (London South L)  
 Sola, John (Mississauga East L)  
**Sorbara, Hon. Gregory S.**, Minister of Labour  
 (York Centre L)  
 South, Larry (Frontenac-Addington L)  
 Sterling, Norman W. (Carleton PC)  
 Stoner, Norah (Durham West L)  
 Sullivan, Barbara (Halton Centre L)  
**Sweeney, Hon. John**, Minister of Community  
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 Tatham, Charlie (Oxford L)  
 Velshi, Murad (Don Mills L)  
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 garry PC)  
**Ward, Hon. Christopher C.**, Minister of  
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 Wildman, Bud (Algoma NDP)  
**Wilson, Hon. Mavis**, Minister without Portfolio  
 (Dufferin-Peel L)  
 Wiseman, Douglas J. (Lanark-Renfrew PC)  
**Wong, Hon. Robert C.**, Minister of Energy  
 (Fort York L)  
**Wrye, Hon. William**, Minister of Consumer and  
 Commercial Relations (Windsor-Sandwich L)

\*The alphabetical list of members appears in each issue. Lists of the members of the executive council, parliamentary assistants and members of committees, brought up to date as necessary, are published in Hansard in the first and last issues of each session and on the first sitting day of each month.

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No. 109

# Hansard

## Official Report of Debates

### Legislative Assembly of Ontario



**First Session, 34th Parliament**  
Wednesday, November 23, 1988

Speaker: Honourable Hugh A. Edighoffer  
Clerk of the House: Claude L. DesRosiers

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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Wednesday, November 23, 1988

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayers.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### NURSING SERVICES

**Mr. Reville:** The Ontario Nurses' Association, Local 162, is involved in a labour relations matter with the Etobicoke General Hospital. The nurses there have not received a salary increase since April 1, 1987. They are being paid less than their counterparts in other parts of the province. The negotiations process has broken down and the union has filed for arbitration under the Hospital Labour Disputes Arbitration Act.

The hospital is demanding from the union major monetary concessions, concessions that would reverse clauses that have been in their collective agreement for a number of years. The administration tells the nurses that these actions are necessary because of the budget deficits. The hospital in the past has never operated with a budget deficit and these provisions were never necessary before.

Of course, the government will allege that this is a matter between the hospital and the nurses' association, and nothing could be further from the truth. What is happening in this province is that the Ministry of Health is forcing nurses to deliver services for less pay and under grim working conditions, and that is not appropriate. It is high time that the Ministry of Health provided adequate funding so that nurses could be compensated properly and so that their working conditions could be conducive to giving care.

### TRANSIT SERVICES

**Mr. Cousens:** The Toronto Transit Commission's plan to raise adult fares in January 1989 is not unexpected. Each year the Toronto Transit Commission is forced to increase its fares under the users' fair share policy. Transit users in Metro understand that increased demand for service places an additional burden on the TTC to deliver.

What concerns me, however, is the fairness of a provincial policy that seems to place more of the burden on transit riders until the Ministry of

Transportation gets its own house in order. Has the increase in provincial funding kept pace with the increase in fares? Where is the government's commitment to transit services? What is its direction?

A while back, several priorities for transit were set out in Network 2011, among them the Sheppard subway line. Today, we in Metro and greater Metro are unsure of this government's direction and commitment. If the government is going to encourage greater use of public transit, is it going to provide consistent funding for more lines, more trains and more service overall? Is it going to provide the needed funding to increase the efficient use of these services?

The province needs to entice those in the greater Metro area to use public transit and to leave their cars at home. What programs are in place to provide integration of neighbouring systems with York, Durham and Peel?

### SCHOOL OPENING EXERCISES

**Mr. McGuinty:** The removal of the Lord's Prayer from our schools' opening exercises has provoked reactions from concerned people. Some with compelling argument support the move on the ground that some people found the prayer to be offensive, some say that the mechanical reciting of the prayer involved little more than a cold ritual without meaning and others maintain that the "Our Father" has a kind of symbolic significance.

The issue may serve a useful purpose as it draws attention to a problem we encounter in our public school system, the question of religion and values. In our society there is a real problem posed for the school, for the school must serve children who come from families divided into hundreds of religious and antireligious bodies.

This is pluralism with a vengeance. This is a fact and the fact has implications. The school must attempt a so-called neutrality on the great issues of life. It must operate within limited horizons, and this is reflected by the removal of the Lord's Prayer from the opening exercises.

This is an important issue, for there are ways in which the fortunes of a free society are intimately linked to a morally informed and sensitive citizenry with values and standards which are



more than mere habits, which go down below the soil of custom into the rock of clear conviction and are founded on a philosophy of life.

The liberal state depends upon the morality of its people. The state cannot create this morality. It has to take it for granted. Many people feel they want the help of the school in this regard, and the state which is not cognizant of this fact may very well deprive itself of the kind of citizens—

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you. The member's time has now expired.

#### MINISTER'S ANNOUNCEMENT

**Ms. Bryden:** Yesterday the Minister of Health (Mrs. Caplan) unveiled the details of a new regional geriatric program to be established in 1989 in Metropolitan Toronto. An RGP is a co-ordinated system of specialized health services for older people with complex health problems.

The Minister of Health delegated to the Minister without Portfolio responsible for senior citizens' affairs (Mrs. Wilson) the responsibility to make the announcement of this program yesterday at Sunnybrook Medical Centre, one of the seven hospitals and geriatric centres to share in the program.

While I heartily agree that we need to develop a much broader program for delivery of geriatric services to the million senior citizens in the province, I do not think the announcement of this long-overdue addition to our health care system should have been made outside the Legislature. After all, the Metropolitan Toronto program is going to involve startup costs of \$1 million and annual operating costs of \$5.7 million when the program is fully operational.

The minister should have recognized that members of the Legislature expect to hear about new programs in the Legislature before public announcements are made. Members would then have an opportunity to comment on the program's adequacy and to respond to media inquiries about the program. I would have told them that the program should have been extended to the whole province as soon as possible.

#### TEACHERS' SUPERANNUATION FUND

**Mrs. Marland:** Later this afternoon, I will be presenting a petition from the Best of Five campaign, a group dedicated to having all teachers who retired prior to May 31, 1982, receive their pensions recalculated on the best five years rather than the present seven- or 10-year rule. Eighty members of the campaign

led by Marion Hazelton from the Peel area will be on hand to see their petition presented.

There are presently 23,462 retired teachers in Ontario. An amendment to the Teachers' Superannuation Act addressing the proposal I have outlined could benefit 14,589 retired teachers. These people are not asking for retroactive awards but simply a recalculation of their present pensions to ensure a fair and equitable pension for their future for all retired teachers.

#### 1340

In 1986 the estimated cost was \$65 million. Today that has dropped to \$50 million. Money from the pension surplus should be used to fund the recalculation.

I hope the government takes the request seriously and moves in a positive direction on this legitimate and worthy proposal; and I might add, it probably eventually will cover some of the members of this Legislature.

#### LAMBTON COUNTY AGRICULTURAL OFFICE

**Mr. Smith:** I am pleased to stand in my place today to announce the opening of a new facility in my riding of Lambton. On November 10, 1988, I had the pleasure of participating in the official opening of the Lambton county agricultural office located in Petrolia. The Minister of Agriculture and Food (Mr. Riddell) and the member for Dovercourt (Mr. Lupusella), parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Government Services, were in attendance to join in the ribbon-cutting ceremony for this new facility.

I am pleased that the creation of this agricultural office will better serve the rural needs of the communities in Lambton county due to the additional space provided for the people and for the 14 full-time staff to utilize. This new building will enhance the staff's ability to serve the rural community and will offer a meeting place for local agricultural organizations.

The facility features a large boardroom, two computer rooms, a demonstration kitchen and ample parking. I might just add that this new building is approximately two and a half times larger than the old one and the parking lot is approximately four times larger.

The opening of this facility marks a new era for agriculture in Lambton and will contribute to my riding's development. The erection of this building enforces the government's commitment to improve and update services to our rural communities across Ontario.

I want to thank the Minister of Agriculture and Food and the Minister of Government Services for their assistance in this package.



## TRANSIT SERVICES

**Ms. Bryden:** Yesterday the Toronto Transit Commission announced plans to increase fares on January 1, 1989. While they claim the proposal amounted to an average increase of only five per cent, the cost of an adult Metropass will go up by 6.5 per cent and a senior's pass by 7.6 per cent, as well as a student rate at the same amount.

Is this the way to encourage use of public transit? I urge the Minister of Transportation (Mr. Fulton) to sit down with the TTC and the municipality of Metropolitan Toronto and work out a new cost-sharing formula that will put a larger percentage on the province so that we can save the building of highways, we can save the building of expressways and we can save the pollution that comes from the use of auto and bus transit.

**Mr. Speaker:** Oral questions.

**Mr. Pouliot:** There are no ministers here.

**Hon. Mr. Conway:** Ministers are here. Cabinet has just ended. The rest are on their way. They will be here directly, if the honourable members opposite can give me specifics. I know the Leader of the Opposition wants the Premier; I have already sent word that his presence is requested.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

METROPOLITAN TORONTO HOUSING  
AUTHORITY

**Mr. B. Rae:** I have a question for the Premier (Mr. Peterson), but I also have a question for the Minister of Housing. In the absence of the Premier, perhaps I could proceed with that question.

This morning the retiring chairman of the Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority—

**An hon. member:** Retiring?

**Mr. B. Rae:** —retiring involuntarily, I might add, thanks to the actions of the minister and the Premier—held a press conference in which he had some very critical and well-documented things to say about the administration of the Ministry of Housing and the neglect of public housing by this particular minister and by her ministry.

In particular, Mr. Sewell commented on the fact that he has put forward proposals to the ministry over the last two years for some very significant redevelopment on various sites which are now occupied by Ontario housing and which he believes should be improved and renovated.

I would like to ask the minister: Can she explain why her ministry has refused and has failed to proceed with these particular proposals? The three particular proposals I am referring to are Finch-Birchmount, Edgeley Village and Moss Park.

**Mr. Speaker:** I think the question has been asked.

**Mr. B. Rae:** Can she explain why none of these proposals has been given the okay?

**Hon. Ms. Hošek:** This government and this minister are committed to regeneration of our Ontario Housing Corp. stock. We have, in fact, been working actively with our partner, who is the federal government, on doing this. We are committed to doing it and we will proceed with regeneration as we work through our partnership with the federal government, the board of the Metro Toronto Housing Authority and the Ontario Housing Corp.

It is because of our commitments to this that the board of Ontario Housing Corp. set up a committee on this entire question, examined the question and came out with some policy decisions about how to do this.

**Mr. B. Rae:** Mr. Sewell does not set up committees; he gets things done. He gets the architects to do the work and he puts forward the proposals. The minister is blaming Ottawa for the problem, just as the Premier was blaming Ottawa. I think we can begin to see the emergence of a pattern.

Mr. Sewell said, "The problem seems to be the ministry and the minister. They have dug in their heels and seem prepared to do anything they can to sabotage these opportunities. It is a real pity, given the housing crisis and the sad state of existing projects."

I would like to repeat my question to the minister. Why has she failed to proceed with specific proposals, architects' designs included, which have been on her desk in some cases for over a year and which she has failed to do anything about?

**Hon. Ms. Hošek:** I think the member opposite may not be fully aware of the realities we face. Our housing stock, which is managed by the Ontario Housing Corp. all over the province, is jointly owned by ourselves and the federal government. In order to achieve a reasonable way of dealing with regeneration all over the province where there needs to be work done, in order actually to proceed, we need to work with our partners. We are committed to regeneration. We will be moving on it as quickly as possible,

and we have done some backup work to make that possible.

**Mr. B. Rae:** The fact of the matter is that the board of the Metro Toronto Housing Authority met with Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp. CMHC said it was eager to proceed. It has not had problems with the suggestions.

What the minister is saying has been documented as being incorrect by Mr. Sewell, and I think it is important that the House should know that her side of the facts is completely at variance with those that have been put forward by Mr. Sewell.

By way of final supplementary, I want to ask the minister how she can explain the rejection by the MTHA of a very practical proposal which was made, which was going to go ahead and which has now been cut back on; that is, a simple proposal that every single unit should have a superintendent with clear responsibilities and authority for renovation and repair within a building. You cannot go into an Ontario Housing building without finding elevators that do not work, fridges that are on the fritz, people who are living in conditions that are inappropriate and unacceptable, and she has refused the one major reform that would make a difference—to have a superintendent on every site.

**Hon. Ms. Hošek:** The whole question of proper maintenance is a very serious one. The idea of having superintendents is a very good one, and in fact the issue here is under discussion in negotiations between the union and the management of MTHA. There is no disagreement about this as an appropriate way to help manage the building more effectively, but it has to be worked out as part of the negotiations between the union and the management of MTHA.

**Mr. Speaker:** Does the Leader of the Opposition wish to stand down the second question? Is that agreed?

Agreed to.

**Mr. Speaker:** New question.

#### PROPOSED INCINERATOR

**Mr. Runciman:** I have a question for the Minister of the Environment, if he would return to his seat. I know the minister is aware of a proposal for Augusto township by a United States-based firm called Environmental Services Co. Inc. to construct a hazardous waste incinerator. The company has been told it has to follow the Environmental Assessment Act because of a ministerial directive. It is not, however, a legal

designation under the act and, as a result, many questions are being raised about how the minister's staff is handling the project.

So far, Ensco has breached the act by only identifying one site. They have already purchased the property, which is also a questionable step, and they say they will be going ahead with the project despite local opposition, making a mockery of the presubmission, public consultation stage of the process. Has the minister instructed his staff to give private sector projects certain exemptions from some parts of the environmental assessment process? Why is Ensco not required to follow the act to the letter, as are public projects?

1350

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** In fact, I have discussed this with the member previously and I am pleased that he has raised it in the House to clear up some of these problems. The situation will be that they will be required to follow the Environmental Assessment Act if, indeed, they ever put a formal proposal before the government of Ontario.

What they have done, in effect, is to make inquiries about what procedure they would have to follow. The member is quite correct, as far as I know, certainly in ascertaining the degree of opposition in the area, because of (a) the fact that no other options are looked at and (b) the somewhat surprising way in which it was brought to everyone's attention.

The member also knows that the people in his area who were on the council that made the invitation are no longer on council, as far as I know. I can tell the member they will be required to follow the full provisions of the Environmental Assessment Act should they decide to proceed with an application of this kind. They have not submitted any formal proposal.

At that time, when a formal proposal is submitted, I then have the opportunity to designate it officially. I have announced that it is going to be designated if they are going to do that, and if they actually do put forward a proposal I will proceed with that designation.

**Mr. Runciman:** We would like to know how the minister is going to require them under the act, since it is not part of the act. On July 28, the ministry officials met with Ensco representatives. They indicated at that meeting that they were going to take a hands-off approach in respect to this proposal.

This American-based company has looked at a small rural municipality without professional staff, easy pickings for that company. I think it is incumbent upon that minister's staff to play an



active role. He is always talking about being proactive. Here this ministry has taken a hands-off approach and left this municipality to hang out to dry. I am asking the minister why he has adopted this hands-off approach with no consultation or assistance provided to that municipality? When are they going to play a proactive role?

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. Did the minister hear the question all right?

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** One day I get questions from that party saying, "Why are we going so tough on proposals that come forward?" This proposal has not been submitted to us. The next day I hear, "Why are we taking the opposite tack?"

I can assure the member—and I know the concern people in his area feel—that they will be required to go through all of the provisions in the Environmental Assessment Act. If every time I did not like something or ministry officials did not like something that was about to be proposed we said, "Don't bother proposing anything," the province would, in effect, come to a standstill.

What will happen is that if they submit such a proposal, the Ministry of the Environment and a number of other ministries will evaluate that proposal very carefully to determine whether it is acceptable in any way. If there is an acceptance of the proposal after it has gone through the review, then there is a hearing where the people have an opportunity to make known their views. As members know, with the new intervenor funding policy that the government of Ontario has, they would have that available to them.

But to this point in time no such proposal has been received. They should know we will make them go through the very strictest provisions of the Environmental Assessment Act.

**Mrs. Marland:** It is very interesting to hear this minister be so casual and offhand about this particular incident. We have people whose property values are now being diminished in the area of this incinerator. When he says we stand in the House and ask for this approval and that approval and then we come in and balk at something like this, the point is that this is an incinerator we are talking about; we are not talking about a sanitary landfill project.

**Mr. Speaker:** And the question?

**Mrs. Marland:** Based on the fact that the minister is now saying he might allow this to go through an environmental assessment, it is very interesting to us to hear him say that, because I do

not know how he can assess something environmentally when he does not have a benchmark against which to measure the operation.

In this case, we are talking about an incinerator. Could he tell us how he would plan to proceed to evaluate through an environmental assessment this kind of proposal by Ensco when he has already told the House that the clean air act will be at least two years away?

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** The member would know, for instance, that right in my backyard, if you will, about 20 miles from my house as the crow flies, the proposal for the Ontario Waste Management Corp. facility has been put forward. Among the proposals is a component of the OWMC facility that is an incinerator. The Ministry of the Environment will evaluate that according to the criteria that are available in various places, including the World Health Organization information, the United States Environmental Protection Agency, our own testing and Environment Canada.

There are a number of different areas, and as the member knows there was an incinerator approved by the Environmental Assessment Board, I think with 39 or 40 provisions or conditions, in Peel just a short time ago. If the board were to approve it, presumably it would put some conditions on it. The board could still turn it down. There are a number of proposals before us at the present time, including the hazardous waste facility in West Lincoln, which is 20 miles from my house.

**Mr. Brandt:** I stand down my question and defer to my colleague on his question.

**Mr. Speaker:** I am sorry. You wish to stand down or give up your turn?

**Mr. Brandt:** I wish to stand down the leader's question at this time until the Premier (Mr. Peterson) arrives.

**Mr. Speaker:** Is that agreed?

Agreed to.

#### PUBLIC SECTOR PENSION PLANS

**Mr. Philip:** I have a question of the Chairman of Management Board. The minister will be aware that the Rowan Task Force on the Investment of Public Sector Pension Funds has recommended that public servants have some influence and participation in the administration and, indeed, the investment decisions made about their pensions. I wonder if the minister can tell the House whether he is in agreement with that recommendation.

**Hon. Mr. Elston:** With respect to pensions, we have a whole series of issues that we are now dealing with and taking time to study in relation to what our options are. We will be making decisions with respect to those in due course. I can tell the honourable gentleman that we see the approach on pensions as being best aided when we have the best available advice provided to us as we sit around considering these studies. In due course, when that consultation comes to an end, we will make announcements with respect to our pension policies.

**Mr. Philip:** A year ago, this task force was tabled with the minister. He has been sitting on this report for a year. It has some very specific recommendations, and they are recommendations that can be fairly easily implemented in terms of legislation to allow his 80,000 employees to have some say in how their pensions, which belong to them, are invested. Why is he not prepared at least to take those specific recommendations and bring them forward in the form of legislation immediately?

**Hon. Mr. Elston:** With respect to dealing with pensions, as I have said to the honourable gentleman, we like to take some time to consult with the various people involved in pensions. It extends much beyond just the public service employees with respect to all of the things that government makes decisions about.

I can tell the honourable gentleman that there is a good deal of dialogue taking place with respect to pensions between government and employees and others. I can tell the honourable gentleman that we are, in my mind anyway, making progress in discussing the issues at hand. I am not prepared at this point to make announcements or statements that will compromise the discussions we are having in a very real and meaningful way with the public service employees' representatives.

I can tell the honourable gentleman that I am aware of the interest to move forward with discussion on these and to come to final decisions, but I think the best interests of the public and the best interests of the employees are met by ensuring the fullest possible consultation with them.

**1400**

#### METROPOLITAN TORONTO HOUSING AUTHORITY

**Mr. Harris:** I would like to go back to the Minister of Housing and follow up on a couple of the items that were raised by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. B. Rae).

The minister has said numerous times over the last few weeks in response to questions that she is counting on the new chairman to continue the agenda of reform that has been set for the Metro Toronto Housing Authority. In view of Mr. Sewell's comments this morning, specifically the advice to the new chairman when he said, "She is going to have to find some way to get the minister out of the way in terms of implementing the kinds of reforms that are required," and given that the minister has said she wants the new chairman to continue the reforms, some of which were mentioned by the Leader of the Opposition today, my question to the minister is this: Will she now end her obstructionism and permit the new chairman to get on with the reforms that are required?

**Hon. Ms. Hošek:** I am very delighted that the new chairman will be taking her job tomorrow. She has a history of commitment to social causes. She is an outstanding individual in terms of what she has achieved in her own life against great odds. I think she understands extremely well some of what the people who live in our housing face as problems.

I am delighted to be able to support her and the board of the Metro Toronto Housing Authority in doing the work that is really important here, and the work that is important is doing whatever we can to improve the quality of life for our tenants. That means helping them to live in buildings that are well maintained. That means helping them to live in an environment in which they do not have to tolerate drug dealing going on around them. It means working effectively with the board of the Metro Toronto Housing Authority to improve the lives of our tenants. I am delighted to continue to do this with the new chair, as with the old.

**Mr. Harris:** The minister was very obstructionist with the old chairman; I do not think anybody could deny that. She blocked the 20,000 new units. She blocked the superintendents into the homes. She blocked every reform proposal that he brought forward.

I want to ask the minister this. The MTHA has been called an authority without authority. Under the operating agreement it states that the Metro Toronto Housing Authority can only change staffing complement with the consent of the ministry. It must have its budget approved by the ministry. It can fill senior positions only with individuals approved by the ministry—not the political appointments, the senior positions; we all know about the political ones—and cannot alter wage rates without the consent of the ministry.



Is the minister prepared to look at this operating arrangement, where everything that the Metro Toronto Housing Authority has to do comes under her direct control as minister?

**Hon. Ms. Hošek:** The Ontario Housing Corp. is the body that makes policy decisions about housing authorities all over the province. There are 58 of them. One of them is the one for the Metro Toronto Housing Authority. They are governed under an act of this Legislature that was passed long before I came here. So far, that act has served us well in all the housing authorities all over the province. We are always prepared to look at improvements to the act if we think they will make a difference in making the lives of our tenants better.

The most important thing I can say is that I am committed to doing everything possible to make sure that the lives of the people who live in the buildings we manage are as good as they possibly can be. That is why we appoint people to the housing authority boards, together with the federal government and with the city governments. I believe that there is lots of work left to do. I know that the new chairman relishes the work that is left for her to do and that she will get a commitment from the rest of the board to work with her, and I believe that the member will see us continuing to improve the lives of the tenants in our buildings.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

**Ms. Collins:** My question is for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology. As the minister is aware, there is an increasing realization that economic development should not be at the expense of the environment. Would the minister tell this House whether the Premier's Council will consider as part of its mandate the development of an internationally competitive industry in the area of environmental science and technology?

**Hon. Mr. Kwinter:** I am sure members will know that the Premier's Council was established to assist the government in preparing itself for the advent of the new technological age and to make us internationally competitive. One of the areas that we see as a great growth potential is in the whole area of managing the environment and providing research and equipment to do that kind of job.

**Ms. Collins:** Could the minister tell this House what initiatives have been undertaken by the Premier's Council to promote Ontario-based

expertise in the area of environmental science and technology?

**Hon. Mr. Kwinter:** One of the centres of excellence that was established was established at the University of Waterloo, and it is a centre of excellence in ground water management. What they are doing is looking at the whole area of waste disposal, hazardous waste storage and the whole area of ground water equipment management. That is an area where we think we can become leaders in the world. We are very excited about it and we think it is an area that is going to show a great potential and great results for us.

**Mr. Speaker:** The Leader of the Opposition might like to place his question to the Premier.

#### WAGE PROTECTION IN INSOLVENCIES

**Mr. B. Rae:** Following some questions that I was putting to the Premier yesterday, do I understand it correctly that it is the position of the government of Ontario that plants will close and that, indeed, some companies may go bankrupt as a result of the free trade agreement, which takes effect on January 1?

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** I think the government has said that there are a certain number of vulnerable industries. I think we have identified those areas.

Obviously, what happens depends on a great number of corporate decisions that are made by individuals and by corporations. Many of them are not resident here. I think my honourable friend will have a fair fix on where those vulnerabilities lie. Obviously, we will be working with those industries to try to keep them here so they will not close their doors and will be working with all sectors to keep our economy competitive.

At the moment, there are no clear guarantees one way or the other. I do not think anybody is in a position to put a precise figure on that. We will be watching that corporate activity very closely. My honourable friend has read about some of the ones that consider themselves perhaps in some difficulty as a result of the trade agreement.

**Mr. B. Rae:** In April 1985, when the Premier I am sure will remember there was an election campaign on, he stood outside the gate of a factory in Kitchener and promised the workers there that he would bring in provincial legislation requiring companies to justify that decision to close.

On November 26, 1985, which was three years ago, his government received a report from Donald J. M. Brown, QC, who is someone known well to the Attorney General (Mr. Scott),

the final report of the Commission of Inquiry into Wage Protection in Insolvency Situations, which refers specifically to three things that Ontario is constitutionally capable of providing: It can create a trust fund, it can establish a fund or it can create personal liabilities for employers and for senior officers and directors of corporate employers.

In fact, on November 26, 1985, the then Minister of Labour is quoted as saying that he can and will go ahead with provincial legislation this spring—that was the spring of 1986—if in fact the federal government fails to act, and we all know the federal government has failed to act.

**Mr. Speaker:** Question?

**Mr. B. Rae:** These are two very specific things that fall clearly within provincial jurisdiction, and if the federal government were to do them, they would be ruled unconstitutional by any court, and the Premier knows that: plant closure legislation requiring a justification for that closure and legislation amending the Employment Standards Act to protect workers who are affected by bankruptcy.

**Mr. Speaker:** Question?

**Mr. B. Rae:** I wonder if the Premier can tell us why he has not moved in those two critical areas that would help workers.

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** My honourable friend is right. There are a number of areas under which we have the constitutional jurisdiction to act, and one looks at those all the time. These policies are constantly under review, and we are analysing how we protect our people, how we protect our jobs and how we keep our economy competitive. All of those things are looked at. All sorts of punitive legislation could be passed, no question about that. This House has the power to do so.

Would that make us more competitive? Would that really sustain the jobs? Would it really assist us to build a higher standard of living for the people of Ontario? Those are the questions.

I understand generally the line the member is coming from on these matters. He can ask himself whether it is going to help investment, help our factories or help businesses here in that regard. We think we have put in place a reasonable set of protections, but as my honourable friend knows there is in some cases no protection against certain actions that people would take.

1410

**Mr. B. Rae:** My definition of punitive legislation is when workers are told on a Monday that they should not bother coming in on a

Tuesday because there is nothing for them, when they have not been paid three or four weeks' back wages and when they are the ones who are being punished because this government is failing to act. That is my definition of punishment, and that is what affects working people; it is when a government fails to protect those very people it talks about being worried about.

I am giving the Premier two very specific areas where he can do something on behalf of working people as we head into an era of tremendous change, when commission after commission has told him that he can act and he should act.

I would like to ask the Premier again. Let's focus specifically on the question of bankruptcy. Is the Premier telling us that legislation that gives priority to wages instead of giving it to creditors, that makes sure everybody who gets laid off gets some severance pay and has some money in his or her pocket as he or she faces a very uncertain world is his definition of punishment?

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** I do not get the impression this government is trying to punish anyone. My honourable friend, I am sure, would have some advice on new areas of legislation. I can tell him that the government is always looking at those, looking at them in terms of the real effect on workers; how we can assist, how we can keep jobs here and how we can keep the economy growing. I say to my friend, if he has advice on these matters, I am delighted to have it.

## NATIONAL SALES TAX

**Mr. Brandt:** My question is to the Premier as well. I wonder if the Premier would share with this House whether it is the intention of his government to participate in a national sales tax.

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** There is absolutely no indication whatsoever, and I do not know the details. There has been no indication with respect to that.

**Mr. Brandt:** I would like to inform the Premier that an assistant deputy minister from Treasury appearing before a provincial committee studying this matter in fact indicated that most of the technical details have been worked out relative to the question of Ontario participating in a national sales tax, as proposed by the Minister of Finance, Mr. Wilson, at the federal level.

That being the case, the fact that an assistant deputy minister in a fairly senior position within the government has indicated that most of the technical details have already been worked out, is the Premier prepared, assuming Ontario is to join in a national sales tax, to make the same commitment to the people of Ontario that the



Minister of Finance made at the federal level; namely, that any introduction of any change in the tax scheme will in fact be revenue neutral? The commitment has been made federally. Is the Premier prepared to make that commitment provincially, if he enters into the scheme?

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** I am not prepared to make a commitment we are going to enter into the scheme. I think my honourable friend probably should understand that. I am not saying that there are not discussions going on, but I think the Treasurer (Mr. R. F. Nixon) will stand in this House and say this. I say to my honourable friend that the Treasurer will make the decisions on these matters, not some bureaucrat.

**Mr. Brandt:** These meetings, as the Premier is well aware, have been going on for some time, and I think it is fair to the people of Ontario, particularly now that the rhetoric of the federal election has been concluded that all of the misstatements with respect to the amount of revenue that would be generated by a national sales tax can perhaps be put into a more accurate perspective. Let me just share with the Premier that the amount of revenue being generated by his sales tax at the moment is some \$7.8 billion.

According to the assistant deputy minister at these committee hearings, the parameters under which he was asked to work were very simply that this particular tax was in fact to be relatively revenue neutral. In other words, there would not be a net increase to the people of Ontario. All I am asking the Premier to indicate today is exactly the same commitment made by the Minister of Finance federally. With regard to either the national sales tax or some other tax mechanism that is agreed upon, will he give a commitment that he will not look at that as another cash cow to take more money from the people of Ontario and will he keep the total revenue in the ballpark of the \$7.8 billion that he is now collecting? That is a very easy question.

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** If I may say so, my friend is in a somewhat difficult position. He is accusing the federal government of creating a cash cow for itself. That is what my honourable friend is doing. Let me say to him there has been no commitment from this government on entering into any kind of national sales tax and I think my honourable friend should understand that very clearly. It is a different tax. We have a retail sales tax that everybody is aware of and that taxes a number of things, including business inputs. The tax base would be substantially different in this tax, and I can tell my honourable friend that

there has been no commitment to go ahead with that whatsoever.

#### OIL CANADA LTD.

**Mrs. Grier:** I want to ask a question to the Minister of the Environment about a company, called Oil Canada, with which I know the minister is familiar. Oil Canada has a refinery here in Toronto where it takes waste oil, rerefines it and sells it as a pure product. This company has been in business for about 10 years and handles up to 10 million gallons a year. Can the minister tell the House whether he approves of this kind of recycling and reuse and, if so, what policies or practices his ministry has to support it?

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** I have in fact met with officials of that company who have expressed concern that when the price of the product goes down, as the world prices of oil are—there are times when we consider that to be very good from a consumer point of view, but not necessarily from an environmental point of view—the company has problems. They have had discussions with me and asked me to discuss with other ministers what possible actions could be taken in conjunction, for instance, with the federal government to determine whether some sort of support could be made known to them.

I think the concept of recycling oil, of rerefining oil is a good one. I certainly support their efforts to have the federal government assist them in this regard.

**Mrs. Grier:** I guess we have another example of putting it on to the federal government. The meeting the minister spoke about took place many months ago. The minister promised the representative of the company at that time that he would assist it in promoting the sale of its product. They have heard nothing since.

Last July, the Canadian Association of Re-Refiners wrote to the minister asking for help because the price of crude oil was dropping. They have received no reply. Because of this inaction, Oil Canada is due to close this week, putting 55 employees out of work and affecting about 350 indirectly employed people, because their jobs will be at risk too, and, far worse, putting 10 million gallons of waste oil a year out there with nowhere to go.

**Mr. Reville:** Down the sewer, that is where it goes.

**Mrs. Grier:** Down the sewers, into landfills or, even worse, being resold as home heating oil. How is the minister going to deal with this problem and why has he failed to deal with it so far?

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** It is interesting to see where the member wants money to be put in and on occasion where she does not. There are some cases, of course, where the New Democratic Party objects very strenuously to governments providing funding to various companies within Ontario, and I understand that from the philosophy of the New Democratic Party.

In this specific case, the New Democratic Party wants the government to provide funding to the private sector to allow a company to go on, because essentially that is really what would be required. The member would know, and the member did not mention, as the member for Riverdale (Mr. Reville) does not mention, that of course there is another company in Ontario that deals with rerefined oil as well. It is a company, called Breslube Enterprises, located in Breslau, Ontario. That company is also dealing with rerefined oil.

I suppose that if they happen to be in trouble, the member will be up saying that the government of Ontario should provide them with some funding. I think we have to decide where members want government to intervene to provide money for these companies and not. I recently saw the letter from Mr. Fisher to the federal government. They were looking for its assistance. I said I would certainly be happy to support that contention, that they may on a national basis, in a national energy program of reusing oil—

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you.

#### ONTARIO HOME RENEWAL PROGRAM FOR DISABLED PERSONS

1420

**Mr. Sterling:** I have a question for the Minister of Housing. My constituents, Cathy and Bill Jordan, applied for assistance under the Ontario home renewal program for disabled persons early this summer for their son, Christopher, who is not independently mobile, is visually impaired and has a seizure disorder.

To this point in his life Christopher has been dependent on physical support from the members of his family in order to move about. Christopher is now adult in size and they desperately need to install a stair guide and modify their family bathroom in order for Christopher to have mobility within their home.

The Jordan family made application for this interest-free loan through the government program last summer. They have had their renovation plan approved by the Ministry of Housing

and now have a contractor lined up to do these required renovations.

What will the minister tell the Jordans, who are now at about number 100 on a waiting list of over 200 in eastern Ontario, to have this kind of work done? What will she tell Christopher Jordan?

**Hon. Ms. Hošek:** Under the Ontario home renewal program for disabled persons, we have indeed been able to do what you have described here, which has helped a large number, in fact 750 families, to make the kinds of improvements to their households that would allow disabled members to live within them more comfortably.

When our program was originally started, we allocated about \$1.5 million to it. We have now spent \$7.5 million. The allocation for 1988-89 is \$3 million, so we are working through the people who are asking for this kind of help and we are continuing to do that work.

**Mr. Sterling:** There are many families who have already had their plans approved by the ministry, received estimates which are usually only valid for about three months; they usually have a contractor lined up to do work over the winter and it is usually cheaper to do this during this period of time, because small renovation project contractors are not as busy. Would the minister consider waiving the condition that if an applicant who has his plans approved goes ahead with the work, he will not be denied future funding if he has to go ahead in order to accommodate people like Christopher Jordan?

**Hon. Ms. Hošek:** I am prepared to look into that, but the reason for making the decision to give funding only before someone has started is to control the costs. There are good reasons for that method of doing it but I am prepared to look into it.

#### BUSINESS ASSESSMENT

**M. Morin:** J'aimerais poser ma question au ministre du Revenu.

**Mr. Wildman:** Why don't you just walk over and ask him?

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** Then you wouldn't have the benefit of the answer.

**M. Morin:** Pardon?

A constituent of mine, Susan Jacobsen, owns a small wholesale business in my riding. Mrs. Jacobsen is concerned about the discrepancy in the rates at which various kinds of businesses are taxed. Wholesalers are taxed at 75 per cent of assessment while retailers are taxed at 25 to 30 per cent.



I am aware that property tax initiatives were deferred in 1978, when Ontario municipalities failed to reach a consensus regarding the implementation of specific tax reforms.

My question is, when can we expect a review of the business tax in Ontario and what would be the time frame within which the minister would anticipate some concrete results from such consultations?

**Hon. Mr. Grandmaître:** I thank my colleague, the member for Carleton East, who poses a very important question which has been on everybody's mind since 1967 when a commission—

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** I am surprised the opposition did not ask this question.

**Hon. Mr. Grandmaître:** Exactly. In 1967 a commission was instituted and a second one was instituted in 1977. As the member pointed out, no consensus was reached and for that reason I have established a committee of Municipal Affairs, the Ministry of Revenue and also the Association of Municipalities of Ontario.

I am pleased to report that I am expecting a final comprehensive report very shortly, in 1989, which will be introduced to cabinet, and I intend to bring in the proper legislation.

**Mr. Morin:** Thank you. By way of a supplementary, may I ask the minister: how can I best advise Mrs. Jacobsen on the steps that she should take to have her assessment review, pending consultations with the municipality?

**Hon. Mr. Grandmaître:** If my colleague the member for Carleton East can provide me with the specifics, I will certainly look into it. I will have the commissioner of my regional office look into it and provide him with an accurate answer.

#### CONSTRUCTION SAFETY

**Mr. Mackenzie:** I have a question of the Minister of Labour. Is the minister aware of the accident this morning at 10 o'clock to 19-year-old John Ramos at 7 Bishop Avenue, north of Finch Avenue East and Yonge Street?

The release I have simply says: "The elevator was travelling upward, apparently out of control, when the deceased attempted to jump from the elevator to the 10th floor. He became lodged between the elevator and the underside of the 11th floor, then falling to the bottom of the elevator shaft. He was taken to North York Branson Hospital, where he was pronounced dead." Will the minister tell us what he can tell us about this accident?

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** I have before me on my desk a report that I assume the member for Hamilton East is reading from. I cannot tell him any more than he has read into the record; that is, an accident did happen at 10 o'clock this morning and John Ramos, age 19, was pronounced dead at Branson hospital. There is an ominous note in here because of the tragedies that occurred at Scotia Plaza, but I do not have any other information on the incident and I cannot report further to the House.

**Mr. Mackenzie:** Can the minister tell this House how many health and safety committees we now have on construction sites across the province? The minister knows that we have been after him for months and months about the fact that up until recently we had only two. Can he now tell us how many health and safety committees there are on construction sites and when we are going to have health and safety committees on each site in the city?

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** What I can tell my friend the member for Hamilton East is that I hope it is not too long before the regulatory regime in this province will require joint health and safety committees at virtually every construction site possible.

#### FUNDING OF GENERAL FARM ORGANIZATIONS

**Mr. Villeneuve:** I have a question for the Premier. He will remember that two weeks ago he promised the Ontario Federation of Agriculture action within one week on the issue of instituting a checkoff for funding of Ontario farm organizations. Since he was not able to meet the commitment made at that time, can the Premier tell the House when his government will introduce such checkoff legislation for the financing of farm organizations?

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** To the best of my knowledge, my honourable friend was not at the meeting and his facts are incorrect. We did have a discussion. We indicated to the OFA that we are sympathetic with that proposal. There have been meetings with the Minister of Agriculture and Food (Mr. Riddell). He spoke at their convention. The member may well have been there. I am sure he enjoyed his speech, if he was. I think he indicated his approach. They are working now on some of the details.

**Mr. Villeneuve:** The Minister of Agriculture and Food got a standing ovation for stating that the government would, again, institute a check-off method of financing farm organizations. However, we think that the government and the



Minister of Agriculture and Food are now backing down on this.

Could the Premier confirm today that he will be initiating, as soon as possible, funding via checkoff for farm organizations and also provide any information that he has regarding any challenge that could occur under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms if this were initiated?

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** I say to my honourable friend that I think he is right. I read the same article my honourable friend did, that the Minister of Agriculture and Food got a standing ovation at the OFA, which is a remarkable achievement; I am sure an experience never shared by my friend opposite.

**Mr. Villeneuve:** He is backing down.

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** Let me say that the government is not backing down. They are discussing the details. It is complicated in terms of its implementation, whether it should be tied, what mechanisms should be used. There has been a variety of suggestions, including a property tax rebate or a tax on certain commodity groups, as I think my honourable friend knows. Those discussions are ongoing right now. I cannot tell him what the final result will be, but as I said, the government is comfortable with the idea in principle.

#### SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

**Mr. Allen:** I have a question to the Minister of Community and Social Services. As the minister knows, one in six children in Ontario live in poverty, 44 per cent of these children have parents who work for inadequate minimum wages, and 20 per cent of those who receive food from food banks are children under the age of five. Those children and their families now face a triple threat: not just the onset of winter, but also the re-election of a government in Ottawa that has done nothing in four years for the poor in this country and the institution of a free trade regime that will have ominous repercussions in terms of the dislocations of many of the working poor.

1430

Why is the government to which this minister belongs not even now announcing such measures to protect the poor, of which they will be in desperate need, such as a minimum wage of at least 60 per cent of the average industrial wage; lifting the asset ceiling for social assistance which now drives families into deeper poverty and prolongs their climb back into independence and prosperity, and other such measures pro-

posed in the Thomson report that are a needed bulwark for them in the current circumstances?

**Hon. Mr. Sweeney:** The honourable member will recall that two years ago we recognized that families on social assistance moving into the winter months had a particular problem with respect to winter clothing, and we provided additional assistance. I believe it was \$80 per child at that time, and that, of course, has gone up with the cost-of-living increase.

As the honourable member knows, at the present time under our existing legislation, we do not have the authority to provide assistance to working families except in the situation where a local municipality can accept the fact that either mother or father as the head of the family and the nonworking parent can therefore qualify for social assistance.

With respect to the Thomson report, the honourable member is also aware of the fact that this government is reviewing it. We are receiving reaction from groups who are going to be impacted by it. I have indicated that an announcement with respect to our next rate increase would be coming fairly soon. I cannot tell him when we are going to be able to make an announcement with respect to specific enactment of any of the Thomson commission requests.

**Mr. Allen:** The minister and the government do have jurisdiction on the question of minimum wages, for example. But he must be aware, surely, that free trade is going to leave the poorest in Ontario much more exposed and more vulnerable than ever: for example, to low minimum wages; to absent, exploiting foreign owners; to the destruction of social programs; to the dislocations economically which inevitably are going to come and which will leave, as every economic dislocation does, a deposit of poverty that under normal circumstances would be permanent and ongoing unless severe and important measures are taken to counteract that.

He will also need to have assurances, he knows, from the new federal government with regard to the cost-sharing of various programs that enable him to do things in this province for the poor.

I wonder whether the minister is even now, for example, approaching the federal government with such questions as to what its attitude is going to be around negotiations under the cap for increasing asset ceilings, for example; what its attitude is going to be to cost-sharing comprehensive disability insurance or expanding child care spaces in Ontario—



**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you.

**Hon. Mr. Sweeney:** The honourable member knows that my colleague the Minister of Labour (Mr. Sorbara) has been responsible for seeing to increases in the minimum wage in every single year in which we have been the government of the province.

With respect to relationships with the federal government and other provinces, two weeks ago I met the directors of income maintenance of all of the provinces of Canada, and there were two representatives from the federal government there. I spent personally four or five hours discussing with them the implications of the Thomson report, and my staff spent two days with them discussing the implications of that report as well.

The honourable member realizes that it is just as of yesterday morning that the new government in Ottawa took effect. No, I have not yet contacted them, but the member knows that I did, in response to a previous question, forward a copy of the Thomson report to the federal minister on the same day that he and I got our reports. I have not yet heard back with respect to their reaction to it.

#### TABLING OF INFORMATION

**Mr. McLean:** My question is for the Minister of Government Services, and it concerns the flagrant abuse of the rules of this Legislature. I have had two questions on Orders and Notices since December 15, 1987, and I have yet to receive a final reply.

The first question concerns the cost of new furniture and television sets for the offices of the ministers, their staff and all members since June 1985. His interim answer was tabled on December 29, 1987, and he indicated that I would have a reply on or about February 29, 1988. I also have another question with the same dates on it. We are now ending November 1988 and I have yet to receive a reply.

I believe the rules of this House say that I should have a reply within 14 days or a date indicated by the minister. Does the minister know what is going on in his ministry, and when will I have the replies?

**Hon. Mr. Patten:** First of all, it was not just my ministry. Second, the minister asked a question that pertained to the purchases of equipment throughout the government. I assure the member that the information is forthcoming. I believe when the information is forthcoming, he will see the extent of information that is there related to the question he asked.

**Mr. McLean:** I do not know how much longer I am going to have to wait, and I do not believe the rules of the Legislature say that I should have to wait any longer.

On 10 different occasions his ministry has delivered furniture to my constituency office. I have asked for the costs of what the government has paid for delivery on 10 different occasions to my constituency office. Is his government out of control? Is his ministry out of control? If he does not know what is going on, why does he not resign?

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. What a waste of time. Order.

**Hon. Mr. Patten:** My colleagues here are suggesting that I be kind and, in fact, I shall be. The information, as I have said, is being amassed at the moment. He has asked a question that I think raises a very important point, and that is that yes, we are obliged to respond to the member. As I suggested before, when he sees the report, which is probably about an inch thick, it raises the question of how long it takes and the legitimacy of certain questions that might be directed to the auditor instead of making the request of my ministry to spend the kinds of resources that I think were spent in this instance; but the report will be forthcoming and is imminent.

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. That matter has been dealt with.

#### BINGO LOTTERY LICENCES

**Mr. Mahoney:** My question is to the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations. I would like to ask him a question in connection with the issuance of bingo lottery licences. I thought the members opposite would appreciate it.

The people back home are very concerned because, under the current terms and conditions, the aggregate amount of all prizes offered in bingo games on a single occasion under the authority of a regular bingo licence shall not exceed the sum of \$5,500. Municipally licensed events are not to exceed \$3,500, and the province has to approve anything between \$3,500 and \$5,500.

With many local nonprofit groups and charities participating in bingo events in order to raise much-needed capital for their programs, can the minister please clarify the reasons for the different levels of prize money and the different levels of authority?

**Hon. Mr. Wrye:** The current levels of \$3,500—

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. I cannot hear a thing.

**Mr. Ballinger:** You're lucky.

1440

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Is the member for Durham-York (Mr. Ballinger) finished?

**An hon. member:** That's one for Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**Hon. Mr. Wrye:** Thank you. They pay more attention when they are calling the numbers up in Mississauga at the bingos.

The present \$3,500 limit was set by order in council back in 1974 and it has not been changed since. The reason it was set at that time as being the limit of municipal responsibility is that it was felt, and still is, that once one got above the \$3,500 figure, the bingo was beginning to attract people from other municipalities.

In the honourable member's situation a very large giant bingo, as we call them, in Mississauga, giving a very large prize board, would begin inevitably to attract people from neighbouring municipalities such as Etobicoke. It was felt, to be fair to neighbouring municipalities and bingo halls and to the charities in those municipalities, that the province ought to have a handle on those very large prize boards. That has been our view in the past, and certainly that is the reason we have limited the right of municipalities to get involved in these very large bingos.

**Mr. Mahoney:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I was under the impression that when a member was named in the House, as you named the member for Durham-York, he has to leave.

Interjections.

**Mr. Mahoney:** I do have a supplementary.

**Mr. Speaker:** I have other things in mind at the moment.

**Mr. Mahoney:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is always nice to get encouragement from your colleagues.

In many large urban communities particularly, where the bingo business has become so competitive, the groups that do rely on the funds that they raise from these events are looking to offer larger prizes so that they can attract more people and therefore make more money. I wonder if the minister would consider allowing municipalities to have the authority to approve prizes up to

\$5,500, above the \$3,500 level, particularly in large urban communities?

**Hon. Mr. Wrye:** We are always willing to look very carefully at the suggestions made by my friend the member for Mississauga West.

I would remind him, however, that that cuts both ways. Certainly while charities in Mississauga and his community might be the winners this week in terms of having a bingo with a large prize board, if there were a competitive situation where there was a very large bingo taking place in another nearby municipality, the very charities that he wants to protect might be victimized in this case. So we have stayed with the \$3,500 figure. It may be time to have an appropriate look at it.

I must tell him—I will just make this as a final point—that certainly we have had no pressure from the Association of Municipalities of Ontario or, indeed, from any municipalities, including the city of Mississauga.

#### VISITORS

**Mr. Speaker:** If I could have your attention, I would ask all members of the assembly to recognize in the Speaker's gallery a delegation from France, including members of the French National Assembly.

The members are Jean-Pierre Bequet, Claude Birraux, Maurice Briand, Nicole Catala, Jérôme Lambert, Alain Vidalies and Jean-Marie Demange. Please welcome our visitors.

#### PETITIONS

##### TEACHERS' SUPERANNUATION FUND

**Mrs. Marland:** I have a petition that reads as follows:

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"To amend the Teachers' Superannuation Act, 1983, in order that all teachers who retired prior to May 31, 1982, have their pensions recalculated on the best five years rather than at the present seven or 10 years.

"This proposed amendment would make the five-year criteria applicable to all retired teachers and would eliminate the present inequitable treatment."

It is signed by a large number of teachers.

##### PUBLIC SECTOR PENSION PLANS

**Mr. Tatham:** I have a petition that reads as follows:



"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"Pensions: We Pay; It's Time We Had a Say!

"Our pensions come out of our paycheques and determine our future. We want a say over how our money gets used, so we can get a fair rate of return on our savings and turn extra earnings into improved benefits. We want to keep our pensions indexed. We want the same rights as private sector workers and unions to negotiate our pensions."

It is from the Ontario Public Service Employees Union and is signed by 136 signatures. I have affixed mine to the bottom.

### INTRODUCTION OF BILL

#### MOTOR VEHICLE DEALERS AMENDMENT ACT

Miss Nicholas moved first reading of Bill 191, An Act to amend the Motor Vehicle Dealers Act.

Motion agreed to.

**Mr. Speaker:** No explanation?

**Miss Nicholas:** I would love to make an explanation.

**Mr. Speaker:** I am sorry.

**Miss Nicholas:** The bill requires motor vehicle dealers to notify purchasers within 14 days of entering into an agreement for the purchase and sale of a new motor vehicle of the expected date of delivery. This date is made a term of the agreement. I look forward to debating it in the House in a couple of weeks.

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### WORKERS' COMPENSATION AMENDMENT ACT (continued)

#### LOI MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LES ACCIDENTS DU TRAVAIL (suite)

Resuming the adjourned debate on the motion for second reading of Bill 162, An Act to amend the Workers' Compensation Act.

**Mr. Speaker:** I believe the member for Lake Nipigon (Mr. Pouliot) adjourned the debate. The member for Cambridge.

**Mr. Farnan:** I have here a cartoon I wish I could share visually with all members of the House, but I will try to describe it, because it in fact captures the essence of the problems of injured workers and those who have to deal with the Workers' Compensation Board and their

perception of the Workers' Compensation Board.

This cartoon shows two women talking over the garden fence, and in the background the husband of one of the women is banging his head against the wall. His wife remarks to her neighbour, "George is conditioning himself for his visit to the Workers' Compensation Board."

I think all members of this House may identify with that cartoon. We can identify with that cartoon because we have the experience on a very regular basis, certainly on a weekly basis when we are back in our constituency office, of meeting injured workers who are dealing with the Workers' Compensation Board and recognizing their frustrations and their despair.

When we talk to others who deal with the Workers' Compensation Board, whether it is legal clinics or worker adviser offices or trade unionists, the message is the same. I know that in Cambridge at least half of the individual cases that are on my files of individuals seeking support with their problems and their concerns relate to the issue of the Workers' Compensation Board.

#### 1450

There is no need to describe the kinds of despair that individuals have in dealing with the board. I am sure all members will identify with the individual who comes into your office with a very large and thick file, a file that he has been working with for several years trying to get some justice, an individual who has been to every possible source where he feels there may be some help. When you look into the eyes of that particular worker, you can see written in his eyes the despair, the humiliation, the desperation. Very often, they are beaten men and women. They have come to the end of the line, and you will probably gather that, although they are coming to you, they are doing it more out of routine than any real hope that their situation will change.

I know that as a newly elected member back in 1987, as soon as I was elected and had established an office, a succession of injured workers came to see me. I can recall one individual who had a belt tied around his complete package; it was that large. He came in and he put the file on the desk with the belt holding it together. He just sat it on my desk and said: "This is the background of my case. Can you help me?" Simply to go through the documentation in any kind of thorough manner would take several evenings.

I think we have a situation where there are basically thousands of people out there frustrated with the system, knowing there is real injustice in the system, who are desperately hoping that things will change.

The fate of working people who are forced to put themselves into the hands of the Workers' Compensation Board because of work-related injuries and illnesses is a scandal; and it is a scandal that this government cannot dissociate itself from. This government has been in power now for some three years and the best it has been able to come up with is Bill 162. As I will comment on later, Bill 162 does not address the real problems of injured workers in our society.

Only about one in 65 injured workers will ever receive any retraining, and only one out of five workers receiving continuing compensation say they have regained their pre-injury standard of living.

Thousands of workers are injured every year and the numbers have steadily climbed, from 344,000 in 1983 to 442,000 in 1986, an increase of over 28 per cent in three years.

I have to stop and think. The question that was asked by my colleague the member for Hamilton East (Mr. Mackenzie) to the Minister of Labour (Mr. Sorbara) about the unfortunate and tragic fatal accident of the young 19-year-old worker who died on a construction site in Ontario today really drives home to us the importance of this debate.

While New Democrats have been demanding consistently, year in and year out, that there be health and safety committees on every work site in this province, and while as recently as just months we had only two sites where we had this particular form of committee, it certainly reflects very poorly upon this government. When I listened to the minister's answer, that the government is reflecting on the situation and maybe things will change, it simply was not good enough. I think we have to ask ourselves, how many young men and women will die? How many workers will be injured before we address that particular aspect?

Simply to procrastinate, I know you will agree with me, Mr. Speaker, is morally irresponsible, and it is unworthy of this government. I can assure members that New Democrats will continue to press the government to do what is right to ensure health and safety in the workplace so that the number of cases that end up at the Workers' Compensation Board can be radically reduced and these people can have a normal, healthy life instead of having to go through the

awful despair experienced with the Workers' Compensation Board.

The number of injured workers in Ontario who now receive a permanent pension is 106,000, an increase of 29 per cent since 1983. Almost all of them need rehabilitation, yet only six per cent get any rehabilitation service and only one in four of that small group receives job retraining. This is a terrible indictment of us as legislators and of this government in particular, because instead of tinkering and fine-tuning, we need a radical response to a desperate situation.

These are not just statistics. Every individual we are talking about is a breathing, living, warm human being with a family, children and responsibilities.

As I talk here today, flashes are going through my mind of individual friends back home in Cambridge who sit down across the table in my office. I know what they have gone through over many years and I know the tragic consequences to family life, to their own emotional stability as well as their health, and I know that not just their lives are being wrecked and crushed but the lives of their spouses and the lives of their children.

#### 1500

So when I say an increase of 29 per cent and I throw out a figure of 106,000 receiving a permanent pension, each one of those individuals and each individual who deals with this board, the 442,000—let us face it, we are approaching half a million people and we are saying that of those who need rehabilitation, only six per cent get any rehabilitation service and only one in four of that small number gets job retraining.

That, my friends, suggests to me that we are giving up on these individuals. In a sense, we have abandoned them, and I believe we do it at our own peril because they are a rich human resource. They are fine individuals who can contribute and want to contribute, and indeed their dignity as individuals demands that they be allowed to contribute to our society. We as legislators have a responsibility to ensure that they have the opportunity to do so.

Behind the statistics, I want members just to allow themselves to think of the people in their riding that they have sat and talked to, injured workers. What do members see in their eyes as they talk to them? Do they see neglect? Do they see humiliation? Do they see misery? Do they see despair? Do they see hopelessness? That is what I see. I see human lives destroyed.

But always there is flicker of hope. I suppose that is part of the human condition. Although they have been everywhere—they have been to



their union, they have been to the worker adviser, they have been to the legal clinic and they have been to the previous member, and there is a new member of provincial parliament or a new individual who has come in as a worker adviser—they say, “Maybe if I go to this individual, there might be a chance.” Hope springs eternal, and I suppose when we lose all hope we have lost the reason for living. But there is a small flicker of hope that perhaps justice will prevail.

I suppose when the government takes an initiative and says, “Okay, we are going to look at the Workers’ Compensation Board and we are going to introduce a new bill, Bill 162,” in the eyes of the workers this bill only represents a small flicker of light. That is all. It only represents a small flicker of light because they have a feeling that they have seen it all before. They have been down this road before and nothing has changed. Fine-tuning of the board has not resulted in any significant change in their condition.

The government may like to refer to this bill as reform legislation. We saw what reform legislation was back in 1985 with Bill 101. The significant thing about this bill is that it will do a lot. The problem with the bill is that it will not do anything to help the worker.

My colleague the member for Sudbury East (Miss Martel) very clearly pointed out that if this bill is passed, it will affect injured workers, those hurt in the future, those who in the future will require rehabilitation, those who will require recognition of permanent disabilities and those who will need job security.

It has dramatic future implications that I do not think many people realize, and because it has such dramatic implications it was rather sad that the Minister of Labour attempted to rush this piece of legislation through. The Minister of Labour is on record as saying that he wanted to have this legislation through the House before Christmas. He wanted it through without having proper public input, despite the fact, as my colleague pointed out, it had very broad implications to injured workers; we talked, in terms of numbers, of 440,000 people.

There was not broad-based consultation, and of course New Democrats, realizing the implications and realizing that this bill deserved careful scrutiny, fought the approach of the minister. We have demanded public hearings and the minister basically said no. He was asked again and he said no, and he was asked again and he said no.

However, let us be clear that injured workers, people who work in legal clinics, Office of the Worker Adviser offices, trade union movements, all of them realize—

Interjections.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Are you finished?

**Mr. Farnan:** No, I am not finished.

**The Deputy Speaker:** In that case, we would appreciate it if the individual conversations would stop so we could listen to the member for Cambridge. You may continue.

**Mr. Farnan:** I find it rather sad that on a debate like this, which means so much to the injured workers of this province, a government backbencher has nothing better to do but to interject. I am sure if he wanted to participate in the debate he had ample opportunity. I think all of the members of the House had the opportunity to debate this issue. Simply to sit there and to interject while the workers of this province and the legislation that affects them are being discussed is unworthy of a Liberal backbencher and unworthy of this government.

The record will show that out of frustration and out of fear that this bill was going to go through without the injured workers of Ontario having an opportunity to make comment on the bill or to give their input, the injured workers of Ontario came to Queen’s Park and participated in a demonstration. Following upon that demonstration, only then did the Minister of Labour, only then did this Liberal government agree to a series of public hearings. That is sad; that is very, very sad indeed.

1510

I want to make a brief comment about the discretionary power of the board. I am very wary personally, and I can tell members that the injured workers in Cambridge whom I have spoken to are very wary of the discretionary power of the board as it is included in the new bill, because whenever the board has had discretionary power, the injured workers have recognized that this power has been exercised not with justice, but very often to discriminate against them.

On too many occasions in this bill where the board has to deliver services, it does so where it considers it appropriate and not where the legislation states that the board will deliver the services. I think members should understand that the more that is put into the discretionary power of the board, the more injured workers will be critical.

If we think that the current system of workers' compensation is unfair, dehumanizing and miserly, we should wait until we see what happens with the new improved version that the Liberal government is putting forward. If the government gets its way, workers injured on the job will get even less than they do today. Bill 162, the Liberals' proposal for the Workers' Compensation Board, would give injured workers two payments instead of one, but the new pension will be smaller. Even today's meat chart would seem generous in comparison.

Let's look at an example. Let's say there is a 45-year-old skilled worker with a 10 per cent permanent physical disability. Today that worker would get a monthly pension for life of \$191. Under the new Liberal proposal, that worker's monthly pension would be \$23. From \$191 monthly pension, that worker's pension would be reduced to \$23. In addition, the WCB could also give the worker a second payment based on what it thinks he could earn, but if the board decides he has recovered or if he goes back to work, the second payment stops.

We believe that this system will mean less money for injured workers. It is an insult. The beautiful expression that the minister has used throughout his comments on the bill is that the bill is, I think he calls it, "revenue neutral." Do members know what that says to the hundreds of thousands of injured workers? What it says to the hundreds of thousands of injured workers is: "You are suffering now. We are not going to spend any more money. You are going to continue to suffer." It is very, very simple.

There will be a little bit of juggling around. There will be a little bit of smoke and mirrors. There will be a lot of the use of the right buzzwords, a lot of progressive-sounding words that are meant to impress people that real change is taking place. But the message is very clear when the Minister of Labour says this legislation is revenue neutral, because an injured worker who is struggling to make ends meet, struggling to keep his dignity and the dignity of his family, sees no reprieve.

If the Liberals get their way, it should be very clear that injured workers may still not be able to return to their employer. Bill 162 sounds good. It says that employers should rehire workers within two years of their injury, but there are so many loopholes that this guarantee really does not mean anything.

Bill 162 will not help if you are a construction worker. It will not help if you have been off work for more than two years. Even if you are rehired,

the new bill says the employer only has to keep you for six months. Worst of all, injured workers who are already on a pension are left out. All those injured workers who have fought for years for reform of the Workers' Compensation Board cannot be rehired. All those who fought so hard for fair treatment get absolutely nothing. Is this the Liberal government's form of justice?

If the Liberals get their way, the Workers' Compensation Board will have even more power over workers' lives than it has right now. Let me tell members that injured workers right now believe it already has too much control, but under this Liberal proposal—I should say under this proposal of the Liberal government—the Workers' Compensation Board will decide what an injured worker might earn and the board will say what jobs the worker can do.

I think we have to accept the fact that, in reality, there are some individuals who can be retrained and there are other individuals who cannot be retrained. I am not going to go into all the details, but certainly for some individuals it is significantly more difficult to redirect them into employment. In some communities there are immigrant workers who have worked all their lives in one industry and who perhaps have some difficulties with the language.

We know that very often there are industries that are being affected by trade fluctuations. I am thinking of the textile industry, the shoe industry, where there are significantly large numbers of immigrant workers. This legislation is scary if you are an immigrant worker in a vulnerable industry, because not only is your job in peril but also there is very little option if you are injured at work.

#### 1520

For the first time ever, some of the rights of injured workers will be taken away. For instance, Bill 162 says you cannot appeal the size of your pension to an independent Workers' Compensation Appeals Tribunal. What kind of system is this? We have partisan differences and we take shots at each other from time to time but, by and large, I think we like to view each other as being honest and fair. Within any justice system that makes sense, within any justice system that is fair, there is a right of appeal.

There is something wrong, and I ask the members of the Liberal government: How can they enforce a system on the injured workers of this province where their future is, in many cases, ruined? Here they are coming before a tribunal or coming before the Workers' Compensation Board, which will make a decision on their



pension, and having made that decision, there is no recourse of appeal. What happens when there is a bad judgement? What happens when it is an unfair settlement and there is no appeal process? Can the Liberal government, can individual members of this government, reconcile their consciences with that situation?

For the people who sit across from us in our constituency offices, I would say, more than anything else, it is the feeling not just of despair but of unfairness. If you have an appeal process that you can go to and present your case, there is always the hope that justice will be brought back into the system. But this new legislation, Bill 162, says an injured worker cannot appeal the size of his pension to an independent Workers' Compensation Appeals Tribunal. That is a real tragedy.

It is ironic. The next line I was going to say reads as follows, "In the next 24 hours, someone in Ontario will be killed on the job." We heard my colleague the member for Hamilton East stand up in the House today and report the tragic death of a 19-year-old construction worker. Almost every working minute, someone is injured, and thousands die each year from cancer, heart or lung disease caused by work.

Just as we are sitting here, just as we are making this speech, from the time I stood up to address this House until the time I sit down, there will be 20 or 30 individuals whose lives will be for ever changed as a result of a workplace industrial accident. These are the people who today left their families with their dreams intact and tomorrow will sit down with their lives shattered. These are the people who will come to our constituency offices three months from now and say: "Mike, I can't understand it. I've been to the WCB. I can't get any answers. I can see things are going from bad to worse."

This bill, Bill 162, does not address the problems of the workplace and the problems of injured workers. Anyone could become a victim of a workplace accident or disease. Everyone deserves a compensation system with a decent income, rehabilitation and then a job again. It is a complete cycle. It has got to be from the time of the accident through treatment to rehabilitation and back to work.

Ontario's Liberal Premier (Mr. Peterson) promised to improve health and safety in the workplace and to restore confidence in the Workers' Compensation Board. He has not done that. There has been no legislation to improve health and safety. My friend the member for Hamilton East has pointed out that despite the

repeated calls of New Democrats for health and safety committees on industrial work sites, there are only two such committees as of a couple of months ago.

We had a death today. We had a death just the other day. The question is, how many people must die? How many people will be injured? We have construction sites all over this province without health and safety committees, and that is a moral crime. It is a crime that this Liberal government must take responsibility for. It has been in power for three years, and as it procrastinates, people are being killed and people are being injured. That is not good enough for the people of Ontario. This bill will increase the distrust that injured workers have of the Workers' Compensation Board.

In conclusion, I simply state that we must make sure that injured workers can live with dignity and that they can be treated fairly. My friends, I have heard the expression used around this House and in the halls of these chambers and buildings when people talk to each other about the Workers' Compensation Board. They refer to it as the swamp. Is it not a tragedy that the members of the provincial parliament of Ontario talk about the Workers' Compensation Board as the swamp?

When I talk to a Liberal member or a Conservative member in the corridor and I use the expression "the swamp," they know what I am talking about. I do not have to explain it to them because they have been into the swamp themselves. They have gone into the workers' compensation bureaucracy and tried to solve the problems of their constituents. They have been caught up in the bureaucracy, and the problems have not been solved.

We are lucky because we are going in there on behalf of someone else, but for that individual whom we represent when we approach the WCB, his dignity is at stake. His life is at stake. Very often his marriage is at stake; very often the continued existence of the family unit is at stake; very often the lives of his children and the quality of the lives that his children will lead are at stake.

Bill 162 is a very, very sorry response to the hundreds of thousands of real human stories that are out there, real human beings who are suffering. I can pledge right now, as our critic for this area, the member for Sudbury East, has done already, as our leader will do later today and as my colleagues in this debate have done as they have addressed the issue, that we as New Democrats will continue to fight to stop this bill. It is a fight we are very proud of. We have carried

this flag on behalf of injured workers, we pressured the government for public hearings and eventually the government has succumbed. I hope as the committee travels this province it will do one thing.

1530

**Mr. Reycraft:** Do we start next week?

**Mr. Farnan:** I am hoping the committee will listen.

**Mr. Reycraft:** Let's go next week.

**Mr. Farnan:** Here again we have a government minister coming in, in the middle of a debate, he has not heard what has been going on and wants to interject; he wants to shout out nonsense. Right at a time when we are discussing the problems of the injured workers of this province, we have a minister of the crown come into the debate who has not heard a word that has been said, and that is the minister's response to injured workers. That is an insult to the injured workers of this province, and he should be ashamed of himself.

**Mr. J. B. Nixon:** Take it to committee. You're scared to take it to committee and have a public meeting on it.

**Miss Martel:** No, we're not. Talk to the minister. He's the one who didn't want it.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. The member for Cambridge has the floor.

**Mr. Farnan:** As this committee makes its rounds, let me say simply this: I ask the Liberal members and the Liberal government to listen. In my short period in this House, I have seen a committee make the tour of the province on Sunday shopping. While the province spoke with one voice unequivocally and people said to the government, "Don't go through with this legislation," the government has continued to press forward.

I want the government, please, at least to do this: Listen to the injured workers of the province, listen to the people who deal with the injured workers and deal with the WCB and let the legislation reflect that. The best way they will reflect that voice will be to withdraw this legislation, start anew and let's have some real reform.

Again, as New Democrats, we pledge that we will fight to make the changes that will benefit injured workers, will benefit their families and will give them real dignity. Bill 162 does none of these things.

**Mr. Haggerty:** I want to compliment the member for Cambridge (Mr. Farnan) for his

comments and the serious viewpoints put forth, but I think I must bring to his attention one comment I had difficulty in following. It is on page 5086 of the debate on October 20, 1988, and this is the Minister of Labour speaking. He says:

"I look forward to the constructive comments and considered proposals that will ensue, no doubt. I look forward to seeing Bill 162 out of this assembly to a committee and, ultimately, into the heart of the worker compensation system, which will be fairer and more effective as a result of it."

I think the member for Cambridge implied that the bill was not going to a standing committee of the Legislature, and I thought I would correct the record by reading that.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. M. C. Ray):** Are there any other comments or questions? The member for Halton Centre.

Interjections.

**Mrs. Sullivan:** Are we on rotation?

**The Acting Speaker:** I am sorry, we are on rotation. The member for Mississauga South.

**Mrs. Marland:** I certainly did not mind yielding to the member for Halton Centre (Mrs. Sullivan), because I would like to have heard some interesting educational comments, which I am sure will be coming from the government side of the House on this bill in this debate.

I just want to say in response to my colleague in the New Democratic Party, the member for Cambridge, that although some of his pleadings are indeed quite eloquent and certainly sincerely put forth on behalf of injured workers in this province, we certainly must realize that he is speaking to a government which has well demonstrated now, in three and a half years, that it does not listen, it does not care to listen, and when there is a major responsibility that it feels it does not wish to deal with it simply passes that responsibility off to another level of government. Sometimes it is the federal government; sometimes it is the municipal government.

I am certainly hoping they will act on the petition that I presented in the Legislature this afternoon on behalf of another employee group: namely, the professional teachers in this province, who simply would like to have this government amend an act that affects their pensions, and therefore their future, simply to make an equitable pension for all teachers. It would be very encouraging if this government were to realize that equity for pensioners,



especially when there is a surplus in their pension fund, is all they are asking for.

I hope this government will listen a little more than it has in the last three and a half years, because that is the promise it made to the public in Ontario.

**Mrs. Sullivan:** I appreciated the words used by the member for Cambridge in terms of some of the pain we have seen injured workers go through in dealing with the current workers' compensation system, and that indeed is one of the reasons that this bill is before us.

I am really quite concerned, however, at one of the illustrations that the member used in his remarks to compare the proposed bill with the current legislation. The speaker indicated that a worker at 45 with a 10 per cent disability would receive a lifetime pension of \$191 under the current bill and \$23 under the new bill.

I am afraid that the member does not understand the bill in its entirety. The reason I am as concerned as I am is that I have seen this illustration used before and it is incorrect, because what the member is referring to is the noneconomic-loss award, the pain and suffering award, and he has not taken into account the other part of the dual award system that is included in the bill, which is, of course, the economic-loss award. The combination of the two means that there is an enormous difference and the illustration, in fact, is not accurate and will not work.

**Mr. Farnan:** I will not use up the full time, I do not think. I just want to comment on the information or the position that was put forward by the member for Halton Centre in questioning the statistics that were used.

I want to refer the member for Halton Centre to the debate that took place on October 20, when my colleague the member for Sudbury East, on page 5098 of that particular debate, very clearly went through a detailed breakdown of how these figures are arrived at. I would remind the member for Halton Centre that my colleague the member for Sudbury East has worked for a considerable amount of time with the WCB, is very knowledgeable and extremely knowledgeable in the area and did quite extensive research in the area. If time permitted, I would read to the member from Hansard the very detailed and accurate manner in which my colleague presented these facts. They are of great concern, I will tell the member, to the injured workers of Ontario.

Indeed, the second part of the equation that the member for Halton Centre talks about is also part

of the equation that the injured workers are themselves concerned about, because that second part of the equation can mean very little in terms of real support to some workers, and the tragedy is may mean no support to some workers.

1540

**Mr. Mackenzie:** I do not intend to take a long time, nor will I be original in terms of any new arguments that have been made in this debate in this House, but this debate is important enough that I want to highlight a number of the points that were made by my colleague the member for Sudbury East. I think there are questions, as I said when this debate started, that the government and Liberal members are going to have to answer—indeed, if they can—in this piece of legislation.

There are two or three areas where, for reasons that escape me, this government has really made some bad moves. One of them obviously is the Sunday shopping legislation, where they are not in tune with, I think, a majority of the people. In spite of arguments—and that is what bothers me, even about the hearings on this bill—I am not sure they are listening or their ears are open at all, no matter what workers in this province are going to say.

But there is Bill 162, and if any area should wave red flags or danger signals to a government, it is the area of workers' compensation, because it is an area that is a mess and that we have had trouble with for a long time and where there need to be some changes. They have brought in a bill that once again appears to be, unless there are some answers that we have not figured out as yet, totally unacceptable to injured workers.

I do not know whether the government is doing any work on this or not, but I am wondering if it has a single injured workers' group, a single union, a single legal community so far in Ontario that thinks this bill has any merit. I would like to know if they have. They may have one or two. I do not know of one right across the province, and these are the people who are directly involved: the unions, the legal aid clinics, the injured workers' groups and, surprisingly enough, a fair number of members, who also have some expertise in this area. The government literally has here a bad bill, and I cannot understand it.

Another area is, I guess, allied in some of the labour areas, and I think the tragic death of John Ramos underlined that here today. I cannot for the life of me understand why we have to wait months and months, almost a year, for a whole series of amendments, when a very few amendments would at least deal with the construction

problem that caused the death of another worker here today. That could have been done months ago. It could be done next week, and the minister knows it. It does not need the kind of delays we have had.

There are one or two areas where the minister is just walking a slippery slope, and I do not know why, because it is not necessary and he could do a lot to regain some of his own credibility if he took a look at these particular issues.

Okay, Workers' Compensation Act: As I said, my pitch is not new, but I think it is worth doing. This bill does contain some of the most significant changes we have seen in the Workers' Compensation Act since the last bill, Bill 105, in 1984-85. That actually contained some considerable improvements, such as the establishment of the Workers' Compensation Appeals Tribunal, the expansion of the Office of the Worker Adviser, a number of moves that were useful and certainly moves that I know have been used by one heck of a lot of government members, and other members in this House as well, to ease some of the workload and to try to resolve some of the workers' problems and Workers' Compensation Board cases. There were some benefits in the last bill.

In the current bill, unless we are totally misunderstanding it, we do not see them. I think the speech that my colleague made on October 20 in this House was about as good and intelligent a speech on WCB as I have ever seen made, and it was point by point. Sure, at times we get a little partisan, but I did not have the impression that day, while she made her arguments very, very strongly, that she was being partisan. She was speaking as to what she had seen, and not only she.

Members should understand that we sat down for two or three days with the very groups I am talking about—injured workers, union representatives, community and legal workers—and went over the bill. What was outlined to this House was a summary, really, of the concerns they all had and their reading of the new legislation of the Workers' Compensation Board, Bill 162.

The points that were made, and I am not going to reiterate all of them necessarily, were that there have to be answers by this government. There has to be an explanation that holds water—not just an explanation, because we do not accept that any longer—or there have to be changes in the legislation, or the minister is really going to have himself some trouble with Bill 162.

Let me just go over them by headings. Rehabilitation: The Minna-Majesky task force strongly recommended the right of total rehabilitation—physical, mental, social, vocational and economic—for every injured worker. Bill 162 gives the board continuing power to provide rehabilitation services if it considers this appropriate. There is not a statutory right to it. Further limits have been placed, for the first time, on rehabilitation assistance to a worker seeking employment: a maximum of one year. Finally, a worker can apply for a supplement only if he or she has already begun a rehab program. At present, supplements are awarded if you are waiting to start a program.

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** Bob, that's not true.

**Mr. Mackenzie:** Well, if these can be satisfactorily answered—but the minister is going to have to answer every one of them.

The minister stated that the bill will oblige employers to reinstate injured workers in their jobs. That being said, the bill immediately excludes the following classes: construction workers, 323,000 workers; industry with fewer than 20 workers, about 20 per cent of the workers in the private sector; classes or subclasses that may be exempted in regulations. How do we know whom they are going to hit next in this?

The employer's obligation lasts only two years, an employee can be terminated six months and one day after being rehired and the employer will have fulfilled his obligations. In some cases they could pay somebody for two years or hold him for two years and get rid of him. The board decides if the employer has met his obligations, and there is no appeal to the Workers' Compensation Appeals Tribunal. I think there are a number of questions that have to be answered, and a number of those question marks will make this bill simply not good enough and will give the minister nothing but trouble for a long time to come.

Current pension versus new noneconomic loss benefits, points that were outlined, not all of them but some of them: While current pensions under the meat chart are totally inadequate, they are generous in comparison to the new lump sum benefit. Under the new calculations, the pensions granted are much smaller than at present. The principle of a pension for life or a disability for life is destroyed, since pensions under \$10,000 will be given out immediately as a lump sum.

Further problems are that only two reassessments are permitted, and only if there is significant deterioration not anticipated at the time that the rating occurs. I leave that to the



members' own imaginations without going into explanations, because, as I said, I am just going to go over the highlights once again that have been raised. At the time the rating occurs, the board appoints the practitioner who will conduct the assessments. The amount of a pension cannot be appealed to WCAT.

To take a look at a new benefit for future loss of earnings, this benefit and the new pension for noneconomic loss replace the present pension for life. This component is probably the most complicated and is one of the points the Minister of Labour uses when he is trying to sell this bill. The bill says that if a worker gets a pension or is totally disabled for 12 consecutive months, he or she is entitled to this bill. The amount payable is 90 per cent of the difference between what the worker earned before the accident and what the board believes he or she is capable of earning after the accident. This is called "deeming." It is already happening at the board with pension supplements, and the minister knows it and knows there is a problem there. The board deems a worker capable of performing a job on the basis of personal characteristics such as education and language. It checks with Statistics Canada to see how much the job pays, and if the worker will make more with this phantom job, he or she is refused a supplement.

This is occurring whether or not the worker even has the job, and we have had some prize cases, a few of which we have raised in this area. The point is that few workers are going to actually qualify to receive this benefit, even though the Minister of Labour is telling everyone that they will get 90 per cent of their pre-accident earnings until the age of 65.

If the benefit is granted, it is reviewed after two and five years or whenever the Workers' Compensation Board considers it appropriate in the circumstances. The bottom line is that the change from the present pension scheme to the dual system represents a drastic cutback in workers' benefits and dramatic savings to employers. There is little security for injured workers, and the discretionary power of the board is increased even further. I think my colleague the member for Cambridge points out the concern that workers have there universally in terms of the discretionary power of the board.

These represent just some of the worst details. I did not try to cover them all, but there are specific ones, point by point, that are going to have to be answered before this bill begins to pass muster.

I want to conclude my remarks by simply saying this: The minister has said, and said it in this House, I can recall, that this bill is going to be revenue neutral. If he ever gave a wrong signal right from the beginning of the debate, that was it. He has also said, in answer to some of the more heated exchanges in this House over the last few weeks, that this bill is what we are trying to do in terms of a worker who has injured his back and is living on an inadequate income, that this bill will give him more or solve that kind of a problem in terms of the pension that he or she will have.

When it is revenue neutral and when you are going to give that worker more—if indeed we accept that some workers are going to get what they need, and in many cases substantially more than they are now getting—I want to ask the minister and I want to ask every Liberal member sitting in this House, from whom are they going to take it away? If they are going to give some more and they have a revenue-neutral bill, and some of those are going to be substantial increases that they are talking about, who wants the problem of telling the injured workers in the province of Ontario: "Hey, you are getting too much. We have to give John Doe more because he has a serious back problem and this bill is revenue-neutral—no more money involved. We are going to have to take some off it."

#### 1550

The minister himself has said there will be adjustments. Do they honestly want the job, any one of them, with the problems we have already had, with the inequities in workers' compensation legislation in the province of Ontario? Do they really want the job of deciding who they are going to take away from so they can give a little more to somebody else? I do not doubt for a minute that if they do a real, in-depth investigation they will find the odd cheater in the system. We found that in terms of cheating, whether it is social welfare or WCB, it is an extremely small percentage, but they might find the odd one. They might find the odd case where there has been a misassessment, or maybe somebody really is not entitled to that much, although I will tell them, when it is an injury and you are off work and you have to pay the bills and keep your family, that is a pretty difficult decision to make, that maybe we have given you \$10 or \$15 or \$20 a month too much or whatever we have done.

But once they have got to a position where, to sell what they have here they are going to have to cut X number of workers—and I suggest to them that if they are going to solve some of the gross

inequities in what workers are getting, it is going to mean a considerable amount of cutting—I would not want to be the one who has to go to those workers and tell them, “Hey, to give somebody else a just and fair pension, we have to cut back on what you are going to get.” The minister should stop and think about that and every member in the Liberal benches should stop and think about that.

When the hearings are held on this bill, and when workers and community legal aid workers and unions and other interested parties come before them and make their arguments—as I said at the very beginning, I have not yet heard of one of these groups in Ontario; maybe there is one and there are a lot of them and they are involved in workers’ problems that think this bill is anywhere near the answer—when they raise their questions in those hearings, it is not just the two New Democrats who will sit on that committee. It had better be the six or seven Liberals who sit on that committee who are listening to what those workers say, because otherwise they are really asking for a pile of trouble. If their minds are as closed as they appear to be on the Sunday shopping bill, I have not got an awful lot of faith in what is going to happen to workers.

I can tell them, they have seen a demonstration here. They have seen them keep their organization together over the years. They have seen them demonstrate probably a couple of times a year in this Legislature. They have seen themselves get lobbied. They are going to see workers more angry, more upset, and there are going to be one heck of a lot of community groups that are going to be alongside them, unless they give some specific answers to the kinds of points that my colleague raised, which I attempted to summarize once again here today. Those have got to be answered, the changes made, or this bill is simply no good.

**Mr. Speaker:** Are there any questions or comments arising out of the speech of the member for Hamilton East?

**Mr. Morin-Strom:** It is with considerable concern that I come to speak on Bill 162, this government’s attempt to do something about the workers’ compensation system. Certainly as an elected member—and I would think that most elected members would have the same experience—I think there is no part of the government of Ontario that we see more in our day-to-day working with individuals in our local communities, which is of tremendous concern at the local level. We get more people coming into my office in Sault Ste. Marie who are having

problems, who are having fights, who are having real injustice done to them when it comes to their treatment by the Workers’ Compensation Board. It is the most serious single area of activity of this government in terms of causing serious impact on the day-to-day lives of families across this province. For years we have had governments that have attempted to do something in terms of wrestling with the workers’ compensation system, but with very little effect. It has been a tough area and the efforts to date have been not very impressive at all.

Sure, in recent years, particularly under the minority government of 1985-87, there were a few important reforms. For example, in 1985 all WC benefits were indexed to inflation. We had the establishment of the Workers’ Compensation Appeals Tribunal and then we had the establishment of worker adviser offices as well, the kind of offices needed to provide professional advice and counselling to workers in the fights they were having to wage against the Workers’ Compensation Board to ensure just and equitable treatment. Those have been benefits that have assisted workers to some degree, but the fundamental problems remain.

The workers’ compensation system in Ontario is not working. Discriminatory and inconsistent in its application, petty and inadequate in its coverage, clumsy and frustrating in its administration, workers’ compensation has lost the faith and the trust of the very people it should be serving, the injured workers of Ontario.

There are difficulties in analysing Bill 162 with precision. Many of the changes Bill 162 will bring about will be implemented and operated through regulations which will be formulated later and, it should be noted, which are outside of this legislative process and outside of the bill we are addressing today. It is unfortunate that the government has not been much more specific in this bill in terms of where we are going to go with the workers’ compensation system and enforcing on the Workers’ Compensation Board some discipline in terms of fair and equitable treatment of the workers of this province.

Of greater concern, many of the new sections of this bill are subject to enormous discretion on the part of that board. This gives the minister his out in terms of who he can blame for the problems of the compensation board, but we would point out that the enormous extent of discretion that has been built into the current regime has not resulted in fairness and justice for workers to date and that adding to this discretion



is not likely to be of benefit to workers in the long run.

There are many things that are questionable, arbitrary, unfair, wrong and unacceptable about Bill 162. Today, I will discuss just a very few, because the time is limited. I will start with the minister's statement on June 20, 1988, when he tabled Bill 162. It goes on at some length about the good things the government is doing and will be able to do more of or better once Bill 162 is implemented. Then it notes: "The overall financial impact of these reforms will be revenue neutral. They will reallocate resources within the workers' compensation system."

This pretty much sums up the significance of Bill 162. Every positive step is accompanied by a major regressive move, whether it is increased discretionary power in the hands of board functionaries, financial cutbacks, decreased access to benefits or what have you. They rob Peter to pay Paul. Whatever benefit comes to injured workers from Bill 162 will come on the backs of other injured workers. That is reactionary cynicism at its worst.

The whole history of the workers' compensation reform in Ontario is a sad testimony to the continuing power of the employers whose only concern is to limit their own costs and financial risks. Ontario's working men and women pay the price with their health, their backs, their blood and their lives.

In the throne speech of November 3, 1987, the Liberals promised to "take steps to ensure a healthy and safe environment in the workplace." However, since the Liberals have formed the government, work-related accidents and fatalities have steadily climbed. The Workers' Compensation Board statistics confirm this disturbing trend.

#### 1600

Meanwhile, the simple truth is that things are just not getting any better. More workers are getting hurt and dying on the job every year, and the minister has not done anything to change that from occurring.

It is very much like the problems we are facing in the health care system today. Rather than address the problem of the health care needs of ordinary Ontarians and their families, the government has become obsessed with the cost of providing it. Never mind that a major part of the cost is due to their receiving improper health care in a needlessly expensive manner; never mind that an endless stream of expert advice says to provide health care through a variety of health professions and in the community, rather than in

institutional settings, no, the Liberals simply charge ahead and target hospitals for budget cutbacks.

The same thing has been happening with the worker's compensation system. Rather than clean up the workplaces of the province, the Liberals want to focus on the cost implications of unhealthy and unsafe workplaces. It is their blind spot and the same fundamental error as they try to come to the assistance, not of the employees but rather the employers who are having to foot the bill. In this case, however, the error is a tragic one because while the minister reassures himself and his government colleagues that big changes are under way, men and women are dying and being injured in record numbers.

And the legislative changes to address the problem? The minister might have something this session and he might not. He does not want to remember that a package of legislative changes that would do the job was accepted at second reading by this House way back in February 1987 and subsequently ignored by this government.

I refer, of course, to the bill in the name of my former colleague Elie Martel. His draft legislation from the previous minority government session received second reading approval from this House in February 1987. But where is it today? If the minister has a better idea, where is it? Where is the action on worker health and safety now that there is a Liberal majority? There is no action from this government.

Where is this government's concern for working men and women, now that it does not have to listen to their concerns through the mechanism that we had from the accord agreement during the minority government years? In Bill 162, if the Liberals get their way, workers on the job will receive less than they do today in many, many cases. Bill 162, the Liberals' proposal for the Workers' Compensation Board, would give injured workers two payments instead of one, but the new pensions will be much smaller. Even today's meat chart, notorious as it is, would seem much more generous in comparison.

Let's look at an example that was detailed by my colleague the member for Sudbury East previously in this House. If you are a skilled worker, 45 years old, with a 10 per cent permanent physical disability, today you would get a monthly pension for life of \$191. Under the new legislation that is being proposed in this Bill, the Liberal proposal, your monthly pension would go down from \$191 to a meagre \$23 a month.

In addition, the WCB would be giving you a second payment, based on what it thinks you could earn. But if the board decides you have recovered or if you go back to work, the second payment stops altogether. We believe this system will mean less money for most injured workers and it is an absolute insult to those workers.

If the Liberals get their way, injured workers may not even be able to return to their employers. Sure, the words in the bill sound good. The bill says that employers should hire workers within two years of an injury, but there are so many loopholes that this guarantee really does not mean anything.

Bill 162 will not help you if you are a construction worker. It will not help if you have been off work for more than two years. Even if you are rehired, the new bill says the employer only has to keep you on for six months. First, injured workers who are already on a pension are left out. All those who have fought so hard for fair treatment will get nothing from this new legislation.

We could go on and look at what this bill will do if the Liberals get their way and give the Workers' Compensation Board even more power over workers' lives. If workers think they have it bad now, under this bill the WCB will decide what an injured worker might earn. The board will say what jobs the workers can do. And for the first time ever, some of the rights of injured workers to appeal are being taken away altogether.

For instance, Bill 162 says that you cannot appeal the size of your pension to the independent Workers' Compensation Appeals Tribunal. So, again, some of the benefits that were provided under minority government are being now taken away as the right-wing, new Liberal government implements its new plans for the workers' compensation system.

In conclusion, the provincial government has to act now to end the misery that the WCB inflicts on injured workers. During this debate, we in the New Democratic Party have highlighted the Liberals' failure to protect working people from injury and disease on the job. Any of us, no matter where we work, could become injured workers. Every working person needs and deserves the guarantee that he will not be thrown away on the scrap heap, that he will get the help he needs if his work injuries make him sick or unable to continue his job.

What the system does now to injured workers is wrong. I and our party will continue the fight to put it right for all working people in Ontario.

**The Deputy Chairman:** Are there any questions or comments arising out of the speech of the member for Sault Ste. Marie (Mr. Morin-Strom)? Are there any other participants in this debate?

**Mr. Hampton:** I want to speak on this bill because I realize in the short time that I have been elected and from my experience before being elected how important this bill is to so many of the people I represent in my community and so many working people all across Ontario.

I think it is worth pointing out that my constituency, the riding I represent, is truly an industrial riding. Almost everybody who lives in the riding is involved in some type of natural resource harvesting, some type of natural resources processing or some kind of manufacturing. We have two pulp and paper mills. We have a couple of what are called chipboard mills. We have a number of sawmills. We have a number of mines. We have a number of people working in the bush logging. We have a number of railroaders.

They are people who work in dangerous occupations; people who very often are injured on the job. They are people who know something about the Workers' Compensation Board because if you go through any paper mill, if you go through any mine or if you go through any logging mill, what you inevitably find is half or more of the workforce will say to you: "Yeah, I had a fight with the Workers' Compensation Board. I don't ever want to have to deal with them again. It is the most depressing, the most damaging relationship I have ever had with any form of the government, dealing with the Workers' Compensation Board."

The minister knows of my interest in the Workers' Compensation Board. A little less than a year ago the WCB decided to do a review of the logging industry. I made it plain to the minister that if he was going to do a review of the logging industry, he should visit virtually every town in northwestern Ontario if he wanted to get an accurate assessment of how people feel about the Workers' Compensation Board.

I have asked the minister a number of questions about the role of the worker adviser. The minister says, on the one hand, that the office of worker adviser is very important in helping injured workers deal with workers' compensation cases. Yet, at the same time, he acknowledges that the waiting list at most of the worker adviser offices is at least a year and in some cases longer than a year. That means an injured worker can go to the workers' compensa-



tion office in Thunder Bay, let's say, and ask for assistance, and they will say: "Why don't you come back and see us a year from now? That's how long it's going to take us to deal with our backlog of cases."

**1610**

I want to say something else about involvement with workers' compensation. Even before I was elected to this House, we had an office in our constituency, which was partly financed by the federal member, partly financed by trade unions, partly working in terms of volunteer work. In the last four years of handling workers' compensation benefits, we have won nearly \$1 million in benefits for injured workers. That is in a small community of 10,000 people.

But the untold hours of work that we have had to put in, the hours of hassle with the Workers' Compensation Board as it is now, are incredible for anyone to imagine, to win those kinds of benefits. We have a lot of experience in my constituency with the Workers' Compensation Board. We know a lot about how it works and how it does not work and, by and large, we can say it does not work.

We also know some of the myths about workers' compensation. One would get the impression from the minister's bill that there must be some people out there receiving workers' compensation who have a lot of money. They must be living high off the hog from workers' compensation. For implicit in his revenue-neutral concept of the bill is the idea that some people who are receiving workers' compensation benefits must be receiving so much money that they can afford to give some of it up.

In all my involvement with workers' compensation, I have never—not ever—met anybody who is receiving workers' compensation benefits who could in any way be called financially well off. Most people who receive any sort of workers' compensation benefit or pension, I think it is fair to say, face a very difficult and very slim financial existence. It is tough. How people who are now receiving a benefit or a pension can be expected to give some of it up is totally beyond me. How that concept ever got in this bill is totally beyond me.

I have talked to the doctors in my community, many of whom have 20 or 30 years' experience with workers' compensation claims, and they all say less than five per cent of the people who claim workers' compensation are undeserving. It is an absolutely minuscule number of people who may put in a claim and who may not be deserving

of benefits. In many cases, they are deserving of much greater benefits than they receive.

To give members an idea of the integrity of some of the doctors who have spoken on this, these are the doctors that the government listens to in terms of northern health policy. These are doctors who have been elected by the Ontario Medical Association to represent the medical association in their dealings with the government. They are widely respected in their own field and they say over and over again that you have to look very long and very far to find any abuse in the workers' compensation system, in terms of workers who are trying to abuse the system.

That is the background of what we are dealing with. In contrast to the situation that is there, what the government has presented is not going to help in any way so many of those people who have had such a difficult situation in the past with workers' compensation; in fact, it is going to hurt them even more.

One of the things we have found in dealing with the Workers' Compensation Board in my office—I will say again for the minister that we have 400 cases on the go now and we get 10 new ones a week—is that the board already, in too many cases, abuses its discretion. In too many situations where the board has either absolute discretion or has a great deal of discretion, it abuses that discretion. I want to give the minister some examples.

The number of cases that we have taken to review and then to appeal to the Workers' Compensation Appeals Tribunal is innumerable. We get a large number of successful decisions from WCAT when we take the cases there. We do all right. It involves hours and hours of painstaking work, but we win a number of the cases.

What is so frustrating, after taking a case to WCAT and demonstrating the facts of the injured worker's situation and demonstrating the legitimacy of his claim, is that a few months later we will have another case that is foursquare identical in terms of the facts, in terms of the medical evidence and in terms of all the other evidence. What does the board do? Does it sit down and look at the previous decision? Does it take into consideration what the Workers' Compensation Appeals Tribunal has said? Not at all. It follows the decision it may have made a year earlier all over again and denies benefits, and we go through the same bureaucratic showdown all over again.

The board seems all too often to ignore the well-placed and legitimate advice and legitimate decisions that have been taken on all kinds of preceding cases. Moreover, the board all too often ignores the expert medical evidence that many claimants present to the board.

We have situations in my office where an injured worker has the opinion of his family doctor as to the extent and the seriousness of the injury. The injured worker then is referred to Thunder Bay to see a specialist. The specialist gives him the same answer, confirming the family doctor's diagnosis. He then goes to workers' compensation and it denies his claim. The injured worker then gets referred to another specialist, this time perhaps in Winnipeg or another one in Thunder Bay or even Toronto, and gets another opinion which agrees with the original family doctor's opinion, which agrees with the first specialist's opinion.

What does the board do? It may order the injured worker to see his own doctor and it denies the claim again. One visit to the board's doctor overrules two specialists and the family doctor who have all seen the injured worker. It happens all too often.

Finally, there are the famous clauses in the Workers' Compensation Act that merely say "in the opinion of the board" or "if the board is of this opinion it may do thus and so." The number of times that we have had to fight the famous "in the board's opinion" decisions—"in the board's opinion, the board does this or the board decides that"—to a successful conclusion is very depressing.

Yet what do we see when we look at this bill? We see rehabilitation services, again, almost totally now at the discretion of the board—"if the board considers it appropriate to do so." On the whole question of reinstatement, if the board decides that the employer has met his obligations regarding reinstatement, there is no appeal for the injured worker. The board has total discretion.

What if there is significant deterioration in the physical condition of the injured worker? What if his injury becomes worse? Again, the board decides; it has sole discretion. Who appoints the practitioner? Who appoints the doctor who is going to have sole discretion in terms of the injured worker in many of the cases now under this bill? The board decides.

The amount of pension only the board can decide. It cannot be appealed to WCAT. New benefits for future losses, the deeming provision—the board deems it. This bill gives the Workers'

Compensation Board more discretionary power than it has ever had before, and I say to the minister the board too often in the past has misused a great deal of its discretionary power.

**1620**

This bill is not going to save money. It is not going to save time in terms of the fights that go on. The minister is going to have more angry injured workers, more cases going to review and more protests about this legislation. On the other side, I doubt very much that it is going to save employers money, because if every case has to go on to review, if every case has to be decided on the basis of painstaking evidence, then we will do that. The legal aid clinics will do it; the injured workers' clinics will do it.

This bill is unfair: too much discretion, too much unilateral power to the board. Those are the problems. Those are the things the minister has to overcome.

I can only appeal to the minister to go out again and talk to some of the injured workers' groups, to ask them individually about the kinds of problems they have had to put up with at the Workers' Compensation Board. If he looks at the kinds of problems they have had to put up with and the kinds of fights they have had to deal with and he places them in the context of this bill, he will see that this bill is going to exacerbate the problem; it is not going to help it. The government is going to create more of a headache. It is not going to solve some of the headaches that are already there.

So I appeal to the minister and I appeal to the committee that eventually holds the public hearings on this: Let's not have the same kind of show that we had with the Sunday shopping legislation, where a couple of the Liberal members of the committee were heard to say, "These people who are appearing before us are not real people." This had better be a very good and a very careful hearing and the injured workers of this province had better be listened to, because if they are not, they have nothing else to lose. They have lost most of what they already had and they will fight the minister for ever on this. I hope he is listening.

**Mr. Brandt:** I welcome this opportunity to share with the other members of the House this chance to respond to Bill 162 as proposed by the minister and to offer some comments in connection with some of our concerns with respect to the bill and also to offer the minister some support in certain areas of the bill that we feel are a step in the right direction.



Let me just say that I recognize—and I welcome the minister's presence in the House this afternoon—that workmen's compensation is an extremely complicated and difficult area of a ministry. I know the minister will agree with that. It is probably one of the most challenging portfolios in that it is extremely difficult to satisfy all sides of a given argument. I say that as a former minister and one who recognizes that the minister is attempting to do what he believes to be right in the case of Bill 162.

That is probably the only nice thing I am going to say, so I am now digressing to move on to some of the areas that I think I want to bring to his attention. But I want him to know that I recognize that this is not a simple or an easy process. It is one that is going to take a great deal of input. I respect the minister's agreeing to the public hearings before committee, which I feel will strengthen and improve Bill 162 very considerably.

Let me say to the minister that I think it is necessary to put the bill into somewhat of a historical perspective and to put the Workers' Compensation Act into a historical perspective as well. The act, as the minister knows, was designed way back in the year 1915, and it was good legislation at the time. It was legislation that was essentially developed and drawn in a fashion that would reflect the needs of the workers and the needs of industry at that particular time, and it worked well for approximately half a century.

But I think it is recognized that the Workers' Compensation Board and the Workers' Compensation Act need some very significant revisions and an overhaul of the system to recognize the realities of the workplace that we have in Ontario today and also to recognize the economic realities of our time.

Over the course of the decades that have passed since 1915, there have been a number of studies, royal commissions and legislative reports, as the minister is aware, that have all looked into the operation and the function and the scope of the WCB, and they have come forward with suggestions not entirely dissimilar to the step the minister is attempting to take with respect to Bill 162. Some were accepted; some were not; some were better than others. But if one takes a look back in hindsight, I think the changes that were made over the years were very much with the best interests in mind of improving the act by people who were sincerely committed to making the improvements that had to be carried out.

What concerns me today, if one takes a look simply at what has been happening in terms of the Workers' Compensation Act, is whether it reflects the realities, the kinds of things that the board should be delivering today, or whether we are developing nothing more than a bureaucratic jungle in terms of increased numbers of people who are shuffling paper and reviewing documentation. The minister, I see, is shaking his head no. However, that is not the experience of the vast majority of the members who have to deal with individual cases that have to be handled in their constituency offices.

That also does not bear up in the light of the increased numbers of people who are on the payroll of the WCB, and that increase is really moving upward at a frightening rate. Some of those increases in terms of personnel, in terms of people to administer the act, are necessary. I do not find fault with each and every one. I would only say that instead of the actual functioning of the act becoming more simple and being more streamlined, what we find is that there is a bureaucratic plugging up of the system which is making it more and more difficult rather than easier for the members to solve the individual problems that come before them.

I would have to say to the minister, and I welcome him to challenge me if I am wrong, that in all probability, if one were to isolate the numbers in terms of increases at the Workers' Compensation Board, it is probably the fastest-growing bureaucracy in the entire government.

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** I challenge you.

**Mr. Brandt:** The minister challenges me. Produce the figures; I want to know which is the fastest-growing bureaucracy. The fact of the matter is that it is growing at an extremely rapid rate and I will await, since I raise this by way of question, the minister's detailed analysis of what is the fastest-growing bureaucracy in the provincial government and he can then put that into perspective in terms of how that matches up with the WCB.

Let me just say that my concern with respect to bureaucratic growth is not simply that we are hiring more and more government employees; it is that that money should be going to the workers of this province. That money should be going, if in no other direction, to reduce the unfunded liability, which is also increasing at a staggering rate and at a frightening rate at the present time. It should not simply be going to more people who are going to be doing nothing other, in some instances, than reviewing reports and shuffling pages.

In short, with respect to some of the changes that have been made in the WCB over the years and some of the alterations such as the minister is proposing in this new bill, I would like to use an analogy and indicate that the WCB is like a fine old house that has had perhaps one too many additions added or one too many renovations done and now the entire structure is unstable, and if we are not careful, the next ill-planned renovation could bring the entire structure tumbling to the ground. That is what concerns us in this party.

That unwanted and ill-planned renovation that I am speaking of could very well be Bill 162, and I want to outline why I feel that way.

Members will remember all too well the very angry crowd of injured workers who stormed the Legislature not all that many weeks ago. The Speaker himself, a respected veteran of this assembly, stated at the time that it was one of the most frightening incidents he had witnessed here at Queen's Park. I think the minister will agree, it was frightening and it was unprecedented in many respects.

**1630**

The question has to be asked: What incited this degree of passion, this degree of concern on the part of these injured workers and this willingness to travel so far outside the normal boundary of conduct we usually see in this province and in this place and that forced them to come here and demonstrate in a rather violent way?

Again, the answer to what precipitated that particular action is Bill 162, which is fraught with unanswered questions and areas of concern to people who are interested in the Workers' Compensation Board on both sides of the issue, both employers and employees.

This is a bill the minister would have us believe is something that these very workers desire and that will improve their situation. Why would they demonstrate so violently if in fact the bill were going to bring great dividends in so far as the response from the WCB is concerned? Unfortunately, a neutral assessment of the facts simply does not bear the minister out in terms of what those improvements are going to mean.

All members of this House support the purported purpose of this bill, and that is to give the injured workers of this province a better break and a fairer deal. If we can find ways to do that within the context of Bill 162, by amending it properly to explain it more fully, then we will support the bill. But we have questions about it and we have serious reservations about aspects of the bill. In some areas, it may be an interpretative

question, and if those questions of interpretation could be straightened out, then we would join with the minister in supporting the bill. But in other areas there may have to be some dramatic shifts.

We all see that the need for supporting the bill has to be founded on the grounds that it will produce what the workers in fact expect and that it does not produce the opposite of that desired goal.

I should point out as well that we have to answer some of the, I think, very serious concerns from the business community that have been laid before the minister, concerns about the costs, which I understand the minister has indicated will be neutral in terms of this bill. If that is so, then I think he has a very, very challenging time ahead of him to convince both the workers that there is going to be an improvement in terms of how this bill is going to impact on them and, on the other side of the issue, the employers with respect to the costs associated with the bill. To put it in a nutshell, this bill proposed by the minister has in fact angered, alienated and distressed the two major client groups that deal with the Workers' Compensation Board. That in itself, and because of those concerns being expressed, is a major cause for concern on our part as well.

What has the minister done to alleviate these concerns? Has he presented the House with the documents my colleague the member for Cochrane South (Mr. Pope) and others have asked for with respect to the proof we need that we can proceed confidently with this bill? Have we had, as an example, a comprehensive economic impact study to know what the costs are going to be?

I put that in the context of an unfunded liability which in 1975 was \$518 million and which now in 1987 is estimated to be about \$6.7 billion. The estimates are that within the next two to three years the unfunded liability, given the kinds of increases we have been experiencing, will probably be in the range of \$8 billion to \$9 billion.

Have we received from the minister the comprehensive economic impact study we feel we need to make sure we are not causing still further and future economic problems for this province? Has the minister in fact stood in his place and answered in detail the specific questions posed both by members of my party and, in a very eloquent way, by members of the official opposition? Unfortunately, no.



Was the minister, prior to the demonstrations taking place at the very doors of this Legislature, even going to request—I understand it is not his job to demand it, but was he even going to request that we have public hearings on this bill? It was something both opposition parties had to put before him as an absolute requirement for our co-operation in working with him to see that this bill could become legislation in this province. We have wanted those public hearings in order to defuse the very kind of incident that occurred outside the doors of this Legislative Assembly. We wanted as well to make sure that there were full and comprehensive discussions.

In a bill that is as complicated as Bill 162, where you have actuarial numbers that have been developed in a very specific sense with respect to future payouts relative to pensions, lump sum payouts, 90 per cent factors, all of those things that are going to impact on workers, I think it is only reasonable that we have—and I understand that the minister has now acquiesced to this—

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** I advocated it from the beginning.

**Mr. Brandt:** No, he did not advocate it from the beginning. His position at that time—

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** I will tell that story, Andy.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Brandt:** With the greatest of respect, the minister's position at that time was—does he want me to read him his quote? I have it here.

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** Yes, do that.

**Mr. Brandt:** I am glad he asked me to do that.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Through the Speaker, of course.

**Mr. Brandt:** Through the Speaker, if I might, the honourable minister—and I know he is glad I brought this along—said in Hansard, October 19, 1988: "I am not going to order public hearings because I do not have the capacity to order public hearings. I think there should be a hearing process, but it has to be done in the way in which we deal with it in every other bill and that is for the process to be discussed among the House leaders...." But the leadership, as it would be expected, relative to—

**Mr. Faubert:** Keep reading it. Read the whole thing.

**Mr. Eves:** Anybody who knows anything about how the system works knows that if the government House leader wants it to happen, it happens and if he doesn't, it doesn't.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mr. Brandt:** The member opposite asked me to read the whole thing. The whole point of it is that the minister could have spoken out very early in the discussion of Bill 162 and he could have made it very clear that his position was that hearings would have been necessary.

I do not want to dwell on that point other than to say that when you have a bill that is as comprehensive as this bill, when you have a bill which is going to impact on the lives of workers as this bill will, it is only right and proper and fair that those workers have an opportunity to have input and make sure that we get on the record the specific interpretation of certain clauses within the bill which I think are important in terms of letting those workers be given the assurance, if you will, that their futures are going to be looked after in a reasonably adequate way.

We did support the call for public hearings on this matter. We joined with the other opposition party because we felt that was only justice with respect to what the workers quite appropriately demanded. However, being realists, we also know that no matter how extensive or how worthwhile or constructive that committee's work might be and those hearings might be, it is really going to come down to the issue of whether the minister is going to listen and receive the input that is going to be provided to him at those particular hearings.

We have not seen any demonstration of the minister's capacity to be flexible and pragmatic on this bill to date. Maybe he will be after we go through the hearings, but it has already been noted, I might add, by one of the members of the New Democratic Party that it certainly was not the kind of environment that we worked in as it relates to the Sunday shopping bill that recently went before committee. We would ask the minister, we would plead with the minister, to look with an open mind on some positive, constructive suggestions that will be made when we get into the hearings.

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** That is always my style, Andy.

**Mr. Brandt:** I recognize that is what he says his style always is, to be pragmatic and flexible, but we will see when we get into the committees themselves.

I would like to close, since my time is running out, by saying on a very sincere note to the minister, as I started out by saying, that I understand the complications of trying to operate a responsive workers' compensation system. I understand the number of people who are



dissatisfied with the system and the kind of struggle that the minister has in coming to grips with some of those problems, but I also say to the minister that the members of my party, joined by the other opposition party, have indicated at least a partial solution to how we can get to the bottom of what this problem is all about and that is a total, fundamental restructuring of the Workers' Compensation Act through a royal commission. We feel that is absolutely paramount because the kinds of amendments that have been brought forward, the kinds of modest adjustments and alterations that have taken place going way back to 1915 are simply inadequate to meet today's needs.

That is why we appeal to the minister again to consider not only Bill 162 on which we will work together to see if we can develop it into a better and more responsive piece of legislation, but we ask again, and we put before the minister in a public way, the need for a royal commission to determine exactly what it is that can be done to develop a 1980s and 1990s-and-beyond kind of act or piece of legislation that will truly reflect the needs of the modern-day worker and modern industries.

**1640**

We have to look at solving some of the problems that are not going to be solved in Bill 162. There are too many areas left open for interpretation in Bill 162 that I, if I have the opportunity, will come before the committee to ask; or certainly through the representatives of my party on that committee, we are going to ask for some of the interpretative aspects of the bill that cause us some concern.

The Workers' Compensation Board, as an example, shall determine the degree of a worker's permanent impairment. The question of the right of appeal and the system of being able to solve some of those cases is the very thing that bogs the members down at the current time, where we have this very, very long and very frustrating process, in trying to find some element of fairness to the workers who are not getting what they truly deserve from the present act.

I have a concern about the requirement to reinstate injured workers, when I look at the realities of most of the cases that I deal with. I know that my colleagues have some of the same experiences. But in virtually all of the cases where we are talking about rehabilitation, my success record, and the success record of the WCB, I might add, leave a great deal to be desired, because I have worked, in many

instances, with construction workers who have language problems, who have a limited education, who have an injury which will, in effect, not allow them to go back to the type of position they had before.

When you start to look at some form of reinstatement, because of their age and a whole series of other factors, there is simply no way to get them back into the workforce. Those kinds of frustrations have to be responded to in a much more adequate and, I might add, compassionate way by the Workers' Compensation Board.

I want to be very, very specific in terms of the minister's response at the committee, relative to the appeals process. I want to make absolutely sure that we do not have some kind of a dictatorial, decision-making body that does not allow members to be able to assist workers when they truly deserve the kind of continued appeal before the board that is necessary in order to bring justice to a particular circumstance.

When the minister looks at an individual member's situation in this House, and if he were to ask virtually any one of them what his or her highest caseload is in terms of the problems that they have to deal with, I think that the first response that he would get is that the largest caseload, the largest number of files in their particular offices relate to workers' compensation. The largest number of files that they have, that are outstanding and that go on, in some instances, for months and years, are workers' compensation.

Some of the problems are most frustrating; to give an example, I had a case in my office this week where an individual whom I have known for years, a construction worker—and I will not use the name here other than that it is an immigrant family—came into my office and the Workers' Compensation Board has accused him of having a leg that was short before his accident.

I knew this man. His leg was not short before the accident. He was injured on the job. He has a legitimate injury. He has a compensable injury and yet somebody in that great tribunal makes a decision and says: "Well, your leg was injured before the accident. Your leg was short." This man has never had a limp. He has never had an injury, to the best of my knowledge, and I have seen him for many years walk around my community.

He does not walk well today. It is extremely difficult for him to stand. It is extremely difficult for him to work. But when somebody comes up with a comment like that to someone who is injured, not only is it a difficult situation for the



worker to accept the fact that he may no longer be able to work, but it starts to develop into psychological damage, as well.

Many of these workers are set back in a very emotional sense because their ability to provide for the livelihood of themselves and their families is taken away from them.

It just bothers me when some bureaucrat somewhere in the system says, "Well, his leg was short before the accident." I would like to know what kind of evidence that individual has to make that kind of statement. This is a case that I know personally and I know the individual is not lying. I know the individual is not trying to take advantage of the system by suggesting there is an injury that is not real and that is not there.

We could go on at length about individual cases. I will not do that today. I am only citing one because it is the most recent one that I have dealt with and it is one that set me back in terms of my feelings towards the Workers' Compensation Board and what is needed to bring about a new and, I think, a more responsive system.

I do not in any way doubt the minister's integrity with respect to what he is trying to do. I know he is trying to bring something forward that he thinks will be a fix for some of the problems. We question the minister on how effective that is going to be. We call on him again to give strong and reasonable consideration to a royal commission, which we feel is essential to clear up a lot of the ills of the past and a lot of the sins of omission and commission of the past and to bring forward a new act, as we say, that will truly reflect the modern Ontario of the 1980s and the 1990s and beyond.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Are there questions and comments on the members' statement? If not, do other members wish to participate in the debate?

**Mr. B. Rae:** I think it is a good idea when we are looking at any law that is brought down that we try to address the question, first of all, of what the problem is that this law is attempting to address. What is the wrong and what is the remedy? It is a pretty good test to apply to any piece of legislation.

I am sure every member in this House has a different view as to what the wrong is or what the problem is. We are all the product of our unique experience and of our unique perspective. I can only describe it as I have seen it and as my friends in this party have seen it, and can only try to speak to the minister about why I think this bill is so wrongheaded. It is because it does not deal with the problems which I face and which, I would think, a great many workers face as well.

I began doing workers' compensation work about 15 or 16 years ago when I worked as a legal aid worker, a law student at the Union of Injured Workers many years ago. I have handled, I would think, several hundred cases since that time. Of course, it is difficult to sum up one's experience, but I would have to say that there are basically five problems that I have encountered as an advocate on behalf of injured workers. I would like to tell the minister what I think those five problems are.

The first is that there continue to be people who are not covered by the act. If you look at where industrial accidents or where accidents at work are—the most difficult and the most prevalent—you will find, for example, that a great many agricultural accidents are not covered, a great many people who work on farms are not covered and there are significant numbers of people who are not covered by the act and who do not have the protection of the act.

The second problem is even greater than that, I believe. It is, I think, one of the great challenges if not the great challenge in terms of our social security legislation over the next decade. That is not simply that people are not covered, but that there are whole numbers of accidents and illnesses that are not covered.

I can say to the minister that some of the most difficult cases that I am sure all of us have to argue with the board about, are those accident recognition claims where we spend days, months, indeed even years, attempting to establish that a particular accident, a particular illness or a particular disability relates to a specific incident in the workplace. It is in some cases impossible to prove and we are unsuccessful in proving it. As a result of this, people go uncompensated and have nowhere to turn, apart from our welfare offices, and we all know how inadequate and hopeless that can be.

**1650**

Perhaps I could just give one very personal example to the minister. I do not know whether he has met Mrs. Larcher yet in Timmins. I do not know whether Mrs. Larcher is watching this debate; I would not be surprised if she were. I would advise and urge the minister to spend some time talking, for example, to the group Mrs. Larcher has organized in Timmins of the widows of miners who worked underground, many of whom will never qualify under the absurd rules that have been created by the Workers' Compensation Board for compensation for illness, for lung cancers that are related to working underground.



Together with my colleague from Windsor, we have met with a number of people from the Bendix plant in Windsor. We have had meetings with the injured workers' groups in that city. I have met with workers in Sarnia. I have met with workers in Barrie. I have met with workers in Sudbury. I have met with workers in Welland. I have met with workers in all parts of Toronto. All have been affected by an industrial problem.

In many cases, either the families are surviving somebody who has died of cancer, or there is a cancer that has not been recognized or there is a respiratory problem that has not been recognized. One of the crucial issues this government has to address is the number of people who simply are not included and covered by workers' compensation, who are not covered by any compensation.

I am going to come back to this at the end of my remarks. What are some of the solutions we would put forward? What would we do in the minister's place? I want to come to that.

The third problem relates particularly to older workers but not exclusively to older workers. Again, I am sure all members who do cases will recognize this problem. People who at 50, 52 or 54, or now even in their 40s, because of the age discrimination that takes place in the workplace are simply rejected by all employers for one reason—they have a disability.

It may be a small disability. It may be a residual disability. It may not be a big deal. But they are consistently rejected and discriminated against in the workplace for one simple reason, that they are sick, that they have had an illness, that they are on a pension. The pension is not enough to cover them and is not enough to do them any good, but that is all they have.

The fourth big problem relates very directly to this, and that is the broad issue of rehabilitation and jobs. If any of us were to ask, in terms of the existing board, what the big weakness is, what the big problem is, I think it was identified very clearly and effectively by Mr. Majesky and Ms. Minna, when they said very clearly that the board should be renamed, should be retitled the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Board, that it should have a specific mandate with respect to rehabilitation, and that this should be set out in the act. It should be obligatory. It should be required. It should be statutory.

There should be a duty to rehabilitate on the part of the board, and that duty should be stated clearly and categorically in imperative terms in the act. It should not be wishy-washy. The

wording should not be unclear. It should be addressed very directly.

Finally, if you are looking at the board itself, the problems that are being expressed by workers obviously have to do with the process. It has to do with the fact that the decisions of doctors are frequently arbitrary. It has to do with the length of time it takes to get a claim heard. It has to do with the length of time it takes to get appeals dealt with. Now, with the Workers' Compensation Appeal Tribunal, it has to do with the length of time it takes to get to the tribunal and the length of time it takes to get decisions.

There are some real hassles, some real foulups and some real bureaucratic problems with the Workers' Compensation Board. I think the person who hurts his or her arm and is off work for a few days, generally speaking, gets good service from the board. When you consider the number of claims the board has to deal with in a year—it is hundreds of thousands—I think it is really quite a tribute to the board that it is able to deal with those particular sets of problems.

Where the system breaks down is when the worker's problem is more complicated than that. Those are the people who are getting shafted in this system and those are the people who are not being helped in the system today.

If I could make one final point, obviously this whole discussion takes place within an environment of a workplace that is still enormously unsafe, where, as we heard today, workers are dying on the job. They are getting killed on the job. They are getting killed in larger numbers and it is more widespread across the province than ever before in our history. Enforcement is still poor. The act on health and safety is still very weak.

We have, as I have described it, an agenda that is sixfold. We are looking at people who are not covered. We are looking at accidents and illnesses that are not covered. We are looking at older workers who are discriminated against systematically and people with long-term injuries who are discriminated against. We are looking at a job market that is harsh and unfair.

We are looking at a rehabilitation program that really is not in place, that is not guaranteed for workers. We are looking at a process that is arbitrary, whimsical and capricious in many cases, takes too long and gives too much power to bureaucrats and board doctors who are not responsible to the patient, but who are responsible to a bureaucratic board. We are looking at an environment in health and safety that can only be described as primitive, cruel and dangerous.



We had hopes that a new minister, dealing with this environment and with these problems, would turn to his officials and say, "Well, let's look at the problems, let's face up to them and let's deal with them." I have had hopes over the last three years that the government would finally recognize the extent of the problem.

When Majesky-Minna came down and was as definitive as it was on what the problem was with rehab, I must say I hoped this government would finally act. After all, many of the members on the task force were Liberals. Ms. Minna is a Liberal. She ran for the nomination in the riding where, if I am not mistaken, the minister lives. She is not unknown to the minister. There were many partisan Liberals on that committee. It was not a product of our party or of the Conservative Party; it was very much the product of groups that were represented by Liberals and Conservatives and by many business people.

I think we are entitled to say that this bill is just a bad bill. It does not deal with the issues I have described. It does not touch most of them, and where it attempts to touch them it does so in a way that is thoroughly inadequate.

Before I get into the heart of my critique of the bill, I first of all want to say to the members in this House that I have heard many speeches given on workers' compensation. In fact, I have read many over the years, because even before I got here we had a great many debates. One of our former leaders, Stephen Lewis, was someone who spoke very eloquently and graciously on this question.

I want to say to the members that I have never heard a more effective, passionate and authoritative speech on the subject of workers' compensation than the one given by my colleague the member for Sudbury East. I want to recommend that speech to the members. If they were not here to hear it, I urge them to read it, because the member there goes through, quite carefully, clinically and analytically, as well as with enormous passion, but with tremendous force of argument, precisely what is wrong with this bill.

I do not want to repeat that effort in detail this afternoon, but I do want to refer to what she said and to the arguments she made because I think they are so compelling and because I think they are simply right.

What the member did in that speech was to talk about the four elements of the bill: rehabilitation, reinstatement, the dual pension system and the question of appeal and discretion. I think each one of the comments she makes is worth repeating.

On rehabilitation, what was said in that speech and what deserves repeating again today is quite simply this: Majesky-Minna made a point. They said if you are going to do rehab and you are going to establish a rehabilitation mandate, the one thing you have to do for workers is make that system guaranteed by law for workers and take away the discretion from the board to do what it wants with workers.

What does the act say? What does the amendment say that has been produced by the minister? The only thing that is mandatory in the bill is that there will be a vocational rehabilitation assessment, but it says nothing about what happens after you have the assessment. The critical question is not having the assessment; the critical question is what you do once the assessment is made.

### 1700

I can tell the minister that wherever the board has had a discretion to exercise, it has exercised that discretion in a way that has not done the workers of this province any good. If we give a bureaucratic board the power to decide when and whether it is going to intervene and help or not help workers, we know precisely what the pressures on that board will be, particularly when we have our friends here to my ideological right who are exclusively worried about the cost of workers' compensation and who are arguing on behalf of employers that the costs should be reduced. We all know what pressures that will bring to bear on the board and on the board's decisions.

We have a contrast. We have a government report that says we have to make the duty to provide rehabilitation mandatory in the act, and we have a government that has received that recommendation and rejected it. They have rejected that recommendation and replaced it with the old concept that has been so much abused, the concept of the discretion of the board.

When it comes to the question of reinstatement in the workplace, what do we have? Well, as we have said before and as the member said so clearly the other day, the section does not apply in respect of at least 25 per cent of the workers in the workforce. Second, it is so full of loopholes in terms of the powers it has and in terms of the protection it provides to workers that really, in offering something and then taking it away, it is almost worse than not offering it at all.

On the question of the dual pension, and this again is fundamental for us, I think the member described most eloquently the problems that have



been experienced in those places that have gone the dual-pension route.

First of all, I saw headlines from this minister saying he was going to abolish the meat chart. I am here to tell the House that is not the case and is not true. The meat chart has not been abolished. There is a rating that is still established by the act, that will still be applied by the board, and that will still apply to the pension which is going to be offered by the board. The only difference is this: This is the first time in our history as a province, the first time since 1915 when workers' compensation was established, that workers are not permitted under this regulation to challenge the schedule and to appeal to an appeal tribunal the size of the pension awarded by the board.

Mr. Speaker, you are a lawyer and you know how fundamental it has been in this province, particularly since the royal commission set up by Chief Justice McRuer, how fundamental it was in the 1960s when Chief Justice McRuer wrote his report on the status of civil rights in the province, how fundamental the right of appeal was to the notion of fairness and due process in this province.

I cannot remember a government—I cannot remember a Tory government since 1963—that would dare bring in a bill that said a worker does not have the right to appeal the size of a portion of his permanent pension, and yet that is precisely what they have done.

I think it is a precedent that is disastrous, a precedent that is a disgrace and a precedent that should outrage, not any New Democrat but anyone with even a modicum of respect for our tradition of civil liberties and our tradition of respect for due process in this province.

The idea is not acceptable that a bureaucracy, whether it is a medical bureaucracy or a political bureaucracy, whatever it may be, would have the power unilaterally to say: "This is how much you are going to get. This is how much we think your claim is worth. This is how much your injury is worth. That is what your finger is worth. That is what you are going to get and you have no right of appeal against that." That is what has to be rejected in this bill and that is what I am hoping will be rejected in this bill.

That is the first part of the pension. The first part of the pension is a tiny little knot you cannot appeal. The second part is a part we do not know anything about because it is almost entirely at the discretion of the board. It is a system that will give to the board the power to say to an injured worker: "We think you can do this job. We think this job is worth so much. We are deeming you

are capable of doing this job, and therefore, this is what the rest of your pension is going to be."

That is an extraordinary amount of power to give to an overworked, harassed, busy bureaucracy that has literally hundreds of judgement calls to make every day. How are they going to make those judgement calls? The minister may not know this because he is the Minister of Labour and he claims not to be involved with workers' compensation.

I will tell him the way the bureaucracy will develop over at the board. They will have a great big book that will be full of sheets. On each one of those sheets, they will say somebody who is such-and-such an age, has such-and-such an education and comes from such-and-such a place can do such-and-such a job. Every quarter they will change the jobs and how much they are worth. They will get it from Statistics Canada, saying a dishwasher makes on average this much and this is what they make.

That is how the discretion will be exercised. In a bureaucracy of that size, with a worker who is dealing with hundreds of claims, with a worker who is harassed working in that bureaucracy, how else is he going to decide? That is the basis on which the system will work. People are going to be told: "We are deeming you can do this. We are deeming you can do that." That is no way to treat people. It is no way to create a pension system.

Finally, on the question of appeal and discretion, as I have said before, the system gives too much to the board and too little to the worker. It provides for far too little ability on the part of the injured worker to challenge the system and to try to make the system fairer. Just as important, in the bureaucratic battle that everybody who knows workers' compensation knows is going on between the board and WCAT, this government has come down right in favour of the board and said to WCAT: "We are cutting you off at the pass because we do not want to give you the power to say to the board that they are not doing things right. We would prefer to give that power to the board."

I think that stinks. To take power away from an appeals tribunal and give it back to a bureaucracy is not the way I want to go on behalf of injured workers.

Monsieur le Président, nous avons un problème dans le système à présent. Nous avons des gens qui ne sont pas couverts par la loi. Nous avons des gens qui ne sont pas protégés par la loi. Nous avons des gens qui travaillent sans protection. Nous avons des gens qui ont été blessés qui



n'ont pas d'assurance. Nous avons des gens qui tombent malades, qui ont le cancer et qui ne savent pas pourquoi ils l'ont. Ils vont à la Commission des accidents du travail et ça ne marche pas. La Commission leur dit: «Hé bien, on ne peut pas prouver que le travail est la cause de votre cancer. Peut-être a-t-il été causé par quelque chose d'autre. Alors, pas de pension.» Il y a alors littéralement des centaines de milliers de gens qui ne sont pas assurés dans notre province et qui n'ont pas la protection nécessaire.

Nous avons un système arbitraire qui donne trop de pouvoir à la bureaucratie. Nous avons un système où le processus n'est pas juste et où on n'a pas le droit d'appel. Nous avons un système qui donne tant de pouvoir et tant de discrétion au Tribunal d'appel des accidents du travail qu'il faut poser la question: «Quels sont les droits des gens qui sont traités comme ça?»

Alors, on a maintenant l'occasion de changer la loi, de créer un système qui est plus juste, mais qu'a fait le Gouvernement? D'abord, ils ont changé le système de pensions contre un système d'aide sociale. Les gens ne veulent pas un système d'aide sociale, ils veulent un système de justice, un système de compensation qui soit juste. Cela, c'est la différence entre notre position et la position du Gouvernement.

Nous insistons pour que les gens aient le droit et la capacité de travailler, et s'ils n'ont pas de travail, alors tous les efforts du Tribunal pour garantir aux travailleurs qu'ils auront le droit de travailler et la capacité de travailler, c'est ce qui manque.

[Remarks in Italian]

1710

I spoke at the beginning of my personal involvement and not simply interest, but my commitment to changing the system. I would say to the minister that if he wants to change the system, there are two things he could do. One of them would be short-term and would deal with a specific problem; the other would be longer-term and would require greater time and greater commitment but needs to be done.

If he wanted to amend the Workers' Compensation Act to improve it, to deal with what is the real problem right now that needs to be dealt with, it is to deal with the question of supplementary pensions. If I were the minister, I would withdraw this act and say that I was going to give back to the board the capacity to make decisions on behalf of older workers who cannot work and who are not in the job market, the discretion to award supplementary pensions and to make that

power clear in the board so we do not have that taken away the way it was just a few months ago.

Then, having done that, I would recognize that it is a stopgap measure for a time. I would then turn to the vehicle of a major royal commission which would have the obligation in this province not simply to deal with the questions of workers' compensation, but to go beyond that and look at the question of a universal sickness and accident plan.

If we had the commitment to a universal sickness and accident plan, think of what the benefits would be. People who were injured in an accident, people who were injured in a car, people who were injured at work, people who got sick from smoking cigarettes, people who got sick from working underground, all of them would be covered and by different kinds of premiums.

But the principle would be clearly established that people who are sick and people who are injured, whether from a vaccination when they were six months old or whether from an accident in the workplace when they were 60 years old, would be covered by a plan whose purpose would be clear. It would be compensation for everyone, rehabilitation for everyone and enforcement of safety for everyone. It would not be complicated; it would require leadership.

Going back to what took place in 1915, think how revolutionary the notion of a comprehensive workers' compensation plan was 73 years ago. It was revolutionary. It was dramatic. It took power away from employers, it took power away from lawyers, and it gave it to workers and to people who no longer had to go and prove that somebody else's negligence was responsible for their accident.

I say to the minister that there is nothing holding him back. He has reports from the Ontario Law Reform Commission; he has reports at the federal level; he has the recommendations of Mr. Weiler himself on this question of a universal sickness and accident plan.

**Mr. Pouliot:** He even has the Toronto Star.

**Mr. B. Rae:** I understand that he even has the Toronto Star, and I do not know whether that has any impact on the minister or not.

I say to him—and I am sorry the Premier is not here for this debate—I think the time is right now for a change in our system that is truly comprehensive, that truly covers everybody who is sick and everybody who is disabled, and that guarantees them compensation, rehabilitation and some degree of justice.

This bill does none of those things. It should be withdrawn by the government. It should be changed for a stopgap measure dealing with the problem in workers' compensation and this direction for change which has to come for the whole system: to put workers back in charge of the system, to give workers the benefits they need and to make sure that, finally, health and safety is seen as something that is going to be enforced by governments, enforced by workers, in which there can be a real change in the system.

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** It is a pleasure now to bring to a conclusion the debate on second reading of Bill 162.

I want to say that I think it has been a good debate overall. I think the debate has been partisan, but that is appropriate in this place. Virtually all of the speakers I have listened to—and I have listened to virtually all of them—have contributed to the consideration of Bill 162.

Indeed, this debate on the bill has really gone on, I think, all over the province, and once we have completed our work here and voted on second reading of Bill 162, that debate will continue in the context of the work that the committee will undertake through hearings and through consideration and through clause-by-clause analysis of Bill 162.

Since introducing the bill back on June 20 of this year, and even before that, the debate on the principles and the issues that are addressed in Bill 162 has gone on at a very high level. Since the introduction, I have been around the province in a number of communities, including Thunder Bay, Sudbury, Ottawa and Windsor—and on Sunday next I will be in Mississauga—listening to the concerns of injured workers and bringing to those workers what Bill 162 attempts to do, to get their analysis and their feedback.

I want to tell members that since introducing that bill, in the ongoing discussions I have had with workers who have been injured at work and whose cases are before the workers' compensation system, each time I have one of those encounters, I am reconfirmed in my view that we must proceed with Bill 162 and the reforms that Bill 162 brings to that system.

We will have public hearings. I truly believe that hearing process will add to the bill. In the careful scrutiny this bill will have when it is before the committee and the public, there are some improvements that we can make, but the fundamental principles in this bill must remain intact. We must proceed because we are dealing with a system that does not respond appropriately

and effectively to a group of workers—not all injured workers, but a group of injured workers.

I am glad the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. B. Rae) made the point, because I think it is one that is worth making, that, by and large, the workers' compensation system does deal expeditiously and appropriately with the vast majority of its cases and issues cheques, sometimes within 36 hours of an injury where a worker will be off work. There are parts of it that are broken. There are parts of this system that need repair; it desperately needs repair and that is what Bill 162 attempts to do.

It is not going to do all of it. If members listen to the debate that went on and has gone on in this chamber, and the debate that has gone on in the province, and the debate that will continue to go on before the committee, time and again they will hear workers and indeed employers and other people who are interested in this system bring about complaints that I acknowledge are not addressed in Bill 162.

#### 1720

There are other issues that we must address. There are problems with administration; in some cases, horrendous problems with administration. There are problems with adjudication. There are problems of delay in having the cases that workers bring before the board and before the tribunal dealt with expeditiously. There are the issues of who ought to be covered and whether an employer ought to be—all employers, including farmers. Those issues that the Leader of the Opposition raises must be addressed.

Indeed, when I presented this bill I acknowledged that fact and I acknowledge it in wrapping up this debate. We must get on with that agenda as well. We must look at those questions, and I will be presenting in this Legislature, during the course of next year, a green paper that will advance that discussion and take us a further step down the road. I fully expect that there will be occasions, probably daily, as the committee does its work, on which those issues not addressed, I acknowledge, by Bill 162, will be addressed.

While I am on the subject of public hearings, I simply have to address what took place in this building and what took place in this debate around the question of public hearings. My friend the leader of the third party raised it once again, and I think it is only appropriate that I once again address that issue.

I think the demonstration we had here at Queen's Park was the one black mark that we have had as this debate has gone forward. I think I, like many other people in this chamber, feel



that was somehow out of the ordinary. It certainly had a profound effect on me. I really sat down after that and re-examined this bill and asked myself some fundamental questions. But I also asked why it happened.

As we began to inquire, we found that injured workers were told, somehow, that their pensions were to be cut, existing injured workers that their pensions were to be reduced; more than that, that somehow the Minister of Labour was trying to drive the bill through without public hearings, that somehow the Minister of Labour did not want this bill to be put up to public scrutiny.

**Mr. B. Rae:** I wonder where they got that idea.

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** I wonder, as the Leader of the Opposition says, where they got that idea.

I do not want to go into that history in great detail. I just want to say that before this House resumed its sitting on October 17, I had a discussion with the president of the Ontario Federation of Labour, an individual for whom I have a great deal of respect and an individual who has a very good relationship with many people in the official opposition.

At that time, when he phoned me up and asked me whether we were going to have public hearings, I said to him, and I say to this House now, I repeat that conversation, "Gord, of course we are going to have public hearings." "Well, how extensive are they going to be, Greg?" he asked me. I said to him: "Gord, I don't know yet. We have just begun the discussions. I have not yet sat down with the House leader and the government House leader has not yet sat down with his counterparts in the official opposition and the third party to work out an agenda. If you'll let that process work itself out, we will know, but I can't answer you right now."

I do not mind taking the partisan flak on the issue of public hearings. I just want to make it perfectly clear that I look forward to the scrutiny and I look forward to the examination that those sorts of public hearings will bring about, because I am convinced, and I tell my friends in the official opposition, that with that public scrutiny, we can make Bill 162 even better than it is now and than it was when it was presented on June 20.

I want to reiterate what the principles of this bill are, what we are trying to achieve with Bill 162. In doing that, I hope to have an opportunity to respond to some of the criticisms that have been raised by the official opposition.

There is a fundamental principle of law, in the law of tort and in the law of restitution, which is this: The law of restitution should, as much as

possible, place an injured party in the situation that he or she would have been in, had it not been for the injury. That is a fundamental principle of our common law. What we are trying to do with Bill 162 and what Bill 162 does do is return the system to a system that will put an injured worker in the place that he or she would have been in had it not been for the injury.

How are we doing that? We are doing that in two very important ways. We are eliminating a system that provides compensation based on a clinical rating on the level of injury and takes no recognition whatever of the extent to which that injury impacts on an individual's ability to earn a living. That system has not worked. The injured workers who were here, the injured workers I see in my office, the injured workers I have seen all around the province and the injured workers each one of us sees in our offices, are conclusive evidence, I submit, that the system does not work.

It does not work because it typically awards a pension, on average, of around 15 per cent, notwithstanding that the nature of that injury in the particular circumstances of the individual may well mean that that injured worker will not soon or ever return to work. Therein lies the fault of the system.

I will read members the section. Subsection 43(1) of the current act says, "Where permanent disability results from the injury, the impairment of earning capacity of the worker shall be estimated from the nature and degree of the injury...." It is not based on an assessment of whether or not the worker will be able to return to work and not based on the real impact of that injury on the future capacity of that worker to return and once again be gainfully employed.

What are we replacing it with? We are replacing it with a system known in the parlance of workers' compensation as a dual award system. The evidence is there. A number of provinces in Canada already have abandoned the former system for the dual award system. A number of jurisdictions in the United States have replaced arbitrary systems with the dual award system. Indeed, the leading authors on compensation systems advocate strongly the abandonment of a clinical rating system for a dual award system.

What does the dual award system do? In Ontario, for the first time, it provides compensation for what we call noneconomic loss. What is that? Noneconomic loss simply acknowledges in a statutory and a compensatory way the fact that an injury impacts on an individual not only in



capacity to earn, but also on the daily life of a worker outside the workplace, and that an injury affects an individual as a family person, as a person in the community and that this ought to be reflected in a fair and compassionate system as well.

Second, the dual award system provides effective, appropriate and just compensation for the impact that an injury has on the ability to work. I remember the speech from the member for Sudbury East saying, "This is a cruel and unusual system which will create arbitrary, uncaring workers' compensation that will be deeming workers." Those remarks were reflected in the comments of the Leader of the Opposition as well.

But let me tell both of them and all members of this House that we have taken specific steps in our bill to ensure that that does not happen. Far from giving the Workers' Compensation Board more discretion, we have qualified that discretion and will qualify it even further by, for the first time, putting the principles under which this sort of determination is made in regulation, and not leaving it to policy and not leaving it to guidelines, so that this House will have an opportunity to scrutinize very carefully what regulations the board will use to determine the real impairment of earnings capacity.

**1730**

In Saskatchewan—and I checked this with the Minister of Labour in Saskatchewan—the one problem they have with their dual award system is an annual deeming provision. The Minister of Labour there told me that they are working on eliminating that and adopting a system much like we have presented in Bill 162.

I will tell the member for Sudbury East one thing further. As we analyse this bill in public hearings and in committee, if we can find even more effective ways of doing it to ensure equity when an injured worker has his capacity to earn in the workplace reduced, if we need better and more appropriate language, I welcome the reflections, the deliberations and the choices that the committee will make.

But the principle of the bill must be maintained, whether or not we can find better statutory language to incorporate that principle, so as to give this system, for the first time in its history, a capacity to deliver compensation that really does compensate and not leave someone who really has not worked for years, with a 15 per cent pension. Surely, that is more just. Surely that is something that every member of this House can support. I hope that in committee we

will analyse those principles and ensure that we have it right.

I do want to say to the Leader of the Opposition, in response to his comments on appeals for the noneconomic loss, that the integrity of this bill will not be threatened or changed if ultimately we opt for another method of appeal. But the bill does now incorporate a method of appeal, and the reason it is structured as it is currently structured, is to deal with medical questions by medical determinations and to deal with them expeditiously so that we will not have a system where issues remain outstanding for years and years.

As the Leader of the Opposition shakes his head, I say to him that I am sure this is a matter that the committee, in considering the bill, will spend a good deal of time deliberating over. But the principle is there that we abandon an arbitrary system, an unfair system, a system that has victimized far too many people in this province, and replace it with a system which not only I, but so very many experts on workers' compensation, believe and have evidence to show is a fairer and more just system.

We are doing one other major thing in this bill. We are, through a number of provisions, taking major steps in reorienting the workers' compensation system and the board towards an agency that does a far better job than it has in the past in helping injured workers get back to work soon, back to the jobs they had before the injury, and if that be not possible because of the injury, to provide a system that provides effective vocational rehabilitation that intervenes early in the life of an injured worker, very early after that injury.

I know that the member for Sudbury East, in her comments, was concerned that vocational rehabilitation was only available for 18 months. That is not the case. If we need statutory words to clarify that, we will make those amendments at the earliest possible moment.

As it stands now, every member of this House who has had a workers' compensation client in need of vocational rehabilitation has seen situations where the board has not intervened for 18, 20 or 24 months, and then the intervention has been marginal. For the first time, we are placing in the statute an obligation on the board to intervene—and to intervene early—and to provide vocational rehabilitation where it is appropriate.

There has been a lot of discussion—and I heard it in the comments of the Leader of the Opposition and of the member for Sudbury East—about the fact that it is only a vocational



rehabilitation assessment that is required under the statute. It is the assessment, getting on with the process, that is important.

I spoke with Maria Minna on this subject and I asked her point blank what her recommendations were really getting at. I said to her, "Do you really want every worker who is injured and away from the job for 30 days to have vocational rehabilitation?" She said to me, "No, we weren't getting at that."

The member for Sudbury East is shaking her head. I will tell her that is what Maria Minna said to me.

**Miss Martel:** When?

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** It was about three and a half weeks ago.

Obviously, you do not want every worker who is away from work for 30 days to have vocational rehabilitation, because the vast majority of them will be in the midst of a healing process and will very soon be returning to the work they did before the injury. You want to direct the resources of vocational rehabilitation where they are needed.

You do not want a system where everyone can demand rehabilitation by virtue of statute, notwithstanding that the injury to the leg will heal and the worker will be back to work. You do not want to create a system of job transfer and job change. You do not want to create a system that is designed to help people shift from one job which they do not like very much to a new line of work. We need other agencies for that, I grant, but it is not the workers' compensation system.

We need to spend more. The board is already gearing up on these proposals, to enhance very substantially the resources that go into a vocational rehabilitation system, but surely not along the lines the member for Sudbury East proposes.

We are taking yet another step on our agenda to ensure that the board does a better job of helping injured workers get back to work. We are providing for the first time in Ontario—and we are only the second province in Canada to put it in the statute—that employers must re-employ, reinstate their injured workers.

In that regard, we are setting down a new road. I acknowledge that over the next few years we are going to have to develop our sophistication with this and are going to have to expand our understanding of it. We have not done it before in Ontario, but I want to say to this House that with reinstatement and with vocational rehabilitation we are taking major steps to get over the terrible reality that so many injured workers have, that an injury in the workplace means a permanent bar to

working again. I think that as we proceed in our reform of this system, those two themes are going to continue to demand and have our attention.

We are also taking some other steps in this bill that I think will substantially improve, in terms of fairness and equity, the system we have. First, we are saying employers must continue to pay benefits they were paying prior to the injury and must do so for a period of a year. Why are we doing that? The reason is simple. First, we want to maintain that bond between the employer and the worker, but second, subsequent to the injury, far too many injured workers find that they are without Ontario health insurance plan coverage, they are without their pensions and they are without the life insurance that has traditionally been paid for by the employer, that those benefits are summarily cut as soon as the injury takes place and the worker is receiving compensation from the system. We say employers must maintain those for a year, because it is generally within a year that workers are either back at work through reinstatement or through rehabilitation.

Finally, we are raising the ceiling on insurable earnings, once again because the current level simply cuts out too many workers from this system. Imagine you are a worker who is earning \$42,000 or \$43,000 and you are injured in a way that means you will not be working for many years because of a very serious and traumatic injury. You look to the compensation system to compensate you. Currently, the system would compensate you under those circumstances on the basis that, notionally, you were earning \$35,100 per year. That certainly is not just, and we are changing that.

Indeed, in a two-step process we are bringing the maximum level of insurable earnings to 175 per cent of the average industrial wage, and that will take in the earnings of some 96 per cent of the working people of this province.

#### 1740

As we were shaping these reforms and trying to repair some of the most serious problems in the worker compensation system, we had to ask ourselves the question of what to do with the current cohort of injured workers. Some 116,000 people in this province are currently the recipients of a permanent partial disability pension. Many of them are compensated in a way, by way of their pension, which reflects in no way the impairment of their earning capacity.

As we looked around in other jurisdictions, we noted that most provinces, when adopting the dual award system, simply paid no regard at all to

the current cohort. We felt, as a government, that would not be fair, that would not be appropriate, that we had to provide a measure of redress for those injured workers who currently receive a pension that does not adequately compensate them in terms of their real impairment of earnings.

The bill provides that a supplement will be made available to any injured worker whose compensation, whose permanent partial disability pension, does not reflect adequately, and the value of that supplement will be equal to the current old age supplement provisions under the current act.

There is much more to be done in reforming this system and creating a fair and equitable system. We need to look at other issues. We need to examine a wide variety of aspects. Indeed, it may well be that, in line with the comments of the Leader of the Opposition, we may venture down some of the investigatory paths he is suggesting.

But right now we have a system that is not providing fair compensation. Right now we have a system that does not do a good enough job in providing rehabilitation services. Right now we have a system that cries out for repair.

In reforming this system and in bringing about the dual award system, I am convinced that finally we will have a statutory regime, we will have a set of regulations, we will have policies that will appropriately and justly compensate injured workers, because for the first time we will have a statute that directs the board to provide compensation, not on an arbitrary basis but on the basis of the real impact of earnings capacity on the worker as a result of the accident.

I look forward to the work that the committee is going to do. I look forward to the process of bringing this bill to that committee and to the submissions that will be seen by that committee. I have already personally begun that process in a number of communities around the province; and in every case, having had an opportunity to explain what benefits Bill 162 will bring to the future injured workers in this province, I am convinced that these principles are worth supporting by every member of this House.

There is another agenda as well, and the Leader of the Opposition alluded to it, but certainly we must ensure that our workplaces give rise to fewer and fewer incidents where workers' compensation is necessary. But so long as there will be injuries in the workplace, we need a system that is humane, that is just and that is fair. I believe that Bill 162 will bring about a system that is far fairer than the one we have now.

The House divided on Mr. Sorbara's motion for second reading of Bill 162, which was agreed to on the following vote:

#### Ayes

Ballinger, Beer, Black, Bossy, Bradley, Brown, Campbell, Carrothers, Cleary, Collins, Conway, Cordiano, Curling, Daigeler, Eakins, Elliot, Elston, Epp, Faubert, Fleet, Fontaine, Furlong, Grandmaitre, Haggerty, Hošek, Kerrio, Kozyra, LeBourdais, Leone, Lipsett, Lupusella;

MacDonald, Mancini, Matrundola, McClelland, McGuigan, McGuinty, McLeod, Miller, Morin, Neumann, Nicholas, Nixon, J. B., O'Neil, H., Oddie Munro, Patten, Phillips, G., Ramsay, Ray, M. C., Reycraft, Roberts, Smith, D. W., Smith, E. J., Sola, Sorbara, South, Stoner, Sullivan, Sweeney, Tatham, Ward, Wilson, Wong, Wrye.

#### Nays

Allen, Brandt, Breagh, Bryden, Charlton, Cooke, D. S., Cousens, Cunningham, Cureatz, Eves, Farnan, Grier, Hampton, Harris, Johnson, J. M., Kormos, Laughren, Mackenzie, Marland, Martel, McCague, McLean, Morin-Strom, Philip, E., Pollock, Pope, Pouliot, Rae, B., Reville, Runciman, Sterling, Villeneuve, Wildman.

Ayes 64; nays 33.

Bill ordered for the standing committee on resources development.

The House adjourned at 6:01 p.m.



**ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS\***  
(130 seats)

First Session, 34th Parliament

**Lieutenant Governor: Hon. Lincoln M. Alexander, PC, QC**

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- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <p>Adams, Peter (Peterborough L)<br/>           Allen, Richard (Hamilton West NDP)<br/>           Ballinger, William G. (Durham-York L)<br/>           Beer, Charles (York North L)<br/>           Black, Kenneth H. (Muskoka-Georgian Bay L)<br/>           Bossy, Maurice L. (Chatham-Kent L)<br/> <b>Bradley, Hon. James J.</b>, Minister of the Environment (St. Catharines L)<br/>           Brandt, Andrew S. (Sarnia PC)<br/>           Breaugh, Michael J. (Oshawa NDP)<br/>           Brown, Michael A. (Algoma-Manitoulin L)<br/>           Bryden, Marion (Beaches-Woodbine NDP)<br/>           Callahan, Robert V. (Brampton South L)<br/>           Campbell, Sterling (Sudbury L)<br/> <b>Caplan, Hon. Elinor</b>, Minister of Health (Oriole L)<br/>           Carrothers, Douglas A. (Oakville South L)<br/>           Charlton, Brian A. (Hamilton Mountain NDP)<br/>           Chiarelli, Robert (Ottawa West L)<br/>           Cleary, John C. (Cornwall L)<br/>           Collins, Shirley (Wentworth East L)<br/> <b>Conway, Hon. Sean G.</b>, Minister of Mines (Renfrew North L)<br/>           Cooke, David R. (Kitchener L)<br/>           Cooke, David S. (Windsor-Riverside NDP)<br/>           Cordiano, Joseph (Lawrence L)<br/>           Cousens, W. Donald (Markham PC)<br/>           Cunningham, Dianne E. (London North PC)<br/>           Cureatz, Sam L. (Durham East PC)<br/> <b>Curling, Hon. Alvin</b>, Minister of Skills Development (Scarborough North L)<br/>           Daigeler, Hans (Nepean L)<br/>           Dietsch, Michael M. (St. Catharines-Brock L)<br/> <b>Eakins, Hon. John F.</b>, Minister of Municipal Affairs (Victoria-Haliburton L)<br/> <b>Edighoffer, Hon. Hugh A.</b>, Speaker (Perth L)<br/>           Elliot, R. Walter (Halton North L)<br/> <b>Elston, Hon. Murray J.</b>, Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet (Bruce L)<br/>           Epp, Herbert A. (Waterloo North L)<br/>           Eves, Ernie L. (Parry Sound PC)<br/>           Farnan, Michael (Cambridge NDP)<br/>           Faubert, Frank (Scarborough-Ellesmere L)<br/>           Fawcett, Joan M. (Northumberland L)<br/>           Ferraro, Rick E. (Guelph L)<br/>           Fleet, David (High Park-Swansea L)</p> | <p><b>Fontaine, Hon. René</b>, Minister of Northern Development (Cochrane North L)<br/> <b>Fulton, Hon. Ed</b>, Minister of Transportation (Scarborough East L)<br/>           Furlong, Allan W. (Durham Centre L)<br/> <b>Grandmaitre, Hon. Bernard C.</b>, Minister of Revenue (Ottawa East L)<br/>           Grier, Ruth A. (Etobicoke-Lakeshore NDP)<br/>           Haggerty, Ray (Niagara South L)<br/>           Hampton, Howard (Rainy River NDP)<br/>           Harris, Michael D. (Nipissing PC)<br/>           Hart, Christine E. (York East L)<br/>           Henderson, D. James (Etobicoke-Humber L)<br/> <b>Hošek, Hon. Chaviva</b>, Minister of Housing (Oakwood L)<br/>           Jackson, Cameron (Burlington South PC)<br/>           Johnson, Jack (Wellington PC)<br/>           Johnston, Richard F. (Scarborough West NDP)<br/>           Kanter, Ron (St. Andrew-St. Patrick L)<br/> <b>Kerrio, Hon. Vincent G.</b>, Minister of Natural Resources (Niagara Falls L)<br/>           Keyes, Kenneth A. (Kingston and The Islands L)<br/>           Kormos, Peter (Welland-Thorold NDP)<br/>           Kozyra, Taras B. (Port Arthur L)<br/> <b>Kwinter, Hon. Monte</b>, Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Wilson Heights L)<br/>           Laughren, Floyd (Nickel Belt NDP)<br/>           LeBourdais, Linda (Etobicoke West L)<br/>           Leone, Laureano (Downsview L)<br/>           Lipsett, Ron (Grey L)<br/>           Lupusella, Tony (Dovercourt L)<br/>           MacDonald, Keith (Prince Edward-Lennox L)<br/>           Mackenzie, Bob (Hamilton East NDP)<br/>           Mahoney, Steven W. (Mississauga West L)<br/> <b>Mancini, Hon. Remo</b>, Minister without Portfolio (Essex South L)<br/>           Marland, Margaret (Mississauga South PC)<br/>           Martel, Shelley (Sudbury East NDP)<br/>           Matrundola, Gino (Willowdale L)<br/>           McCague, George R. (Simcoe West PC)<br/>           McClelland, Carman (Brampton North L)<br/>           McGuigan, James F. (Essex-Kent L)<br/>           McGuinty, Dalton J. (Ottawa South L)<br/>           McLean, Allan K. (Simcoe East PC)<br/> <b>McLeod, Hon. Lyn</b>, Minister of Colleges and Universities (Fort William L)<br/>           Miclash, Frank (Kenora L)</p> |
|---|--|

Miller, Gordon I. (Norfolk L)  
 Morin, Gilles E. (Carleton East L)  
 Morin-Strom, Karl E. (Sault Ste. Marie NDP)  
 Neumann, David E. (Brantford L)  
 Nicholas, Cindy (Scarborough Centre L)  
 Nixon, J. Bradford (York Mills L)  
**Nixon, Hon. Robert F.**, Deputy Premier,  
 Treasurer of Ontario and Minister of Eco-  
 nomics and Minister of Financial Institutions  
 (Brant-Haldimand L)  
**Oddie Munro, Hon. Lily**, Minister of Culture  
 and Communications (Hamilton Centre L)  
 Offer, Steven (Mississauga North L)  
**O'Neil, Hon. Hugh P.**, Minister of Tourism and  
 Recreation (Quinte L)  
 O'Neill, Yvonne (Ottawa-Rideau L)  
 Owen, Bruce (Simcoe Centre L)  
**Patten, Hon. Richard**, Minister of Government  
 Services (Ottawa Centre L)  
 Pelissero, Harry E. (Lincoln L)  
**Peterson, Hon. David R.**, Premier and Presi-  
 dent of the Council and Minister of Inter-  
 governmental Affairs (London Centre L)  
 Philip, Ed (Etobicoke-Rexdale NDP)  
**Phillips, Hon. Gerry**, Minister of Citizenship  
 (Scarborough-Agincourt L)  
 Poirier, Jean, Deputy Speaker and Chairman of  
 the Committees of the Whole House (Prescott  
 and Russell L)  
 Pollock, Jim (Hastings-Peterborough PC)  
 Polsinelli, Claudio (Yorkview L)  
 Poole, Dianne (Eglinton L)  
 Pope, Alan W. (Cochrane South PC)  
 Pouliot, Gilles (Lake Nipigon NDP)  
 Rae, Bob (York South NDP)  
**Ramsay, Hon. David**, Minister of Correctional  
 Services (Timiskaming L)  
 Ray, Michael C., Deputy Chairman of the  
 Committees of the Whole House (Windsor-  
 Walkerville L)  
 Reville, David (Riverdale NDP)  
 Reyecraft, Douglas R. (Middlesex L)

**Riddell, Hon. Jack**, Minister of Agriculture and  
 Food (Huron L)  
 Roberts, Marietta L. D. (Elgin L)  
 Runciman, Robert W. (Leeds-Grenville PC)  
 Ruprecht, Tony (Parkdale L)  
**Scott, Hon. Ian G.**, Attorney General  
 (St. George-St. David L)  
 Smith, David W. (Lambton L)  
**Smith, Hon. E. Joan**, Solicitor General  
 (London South L)  
 Sola, John (Mississauga East L)  
**Sorbara, Hon. Gregory S.**, Minister of Labour  
 (York Centre L)  
 South, Larry (Frontenac-Addington L)  
 Sterling, Norman W. (Carleton PC)  
 Stoner, Norah (Durham West L)  
 Sullivan, Barbara (Halton Centre L)  
**Sweeney, Hon. John**, Minister of Community  
 and Social Services (Kitchener-Wilmot L)  
 Tatham, Charlie (Oxford L)  
 Velshi, Murad (Don Mills L)  
 Villeneuve, Noble (Stormont, Dundas and Glen-  
 garry PC)  
**Ward, Hon. Christopher C.**, Minister of  
 Education (Wentworth North L)  
 Wildman, Bud (Algoma NDP)  
**Wilson, Hon. Mavis**, Minister without Portfolio  
 (Dufferin-Peel L)  
 Wiseman, Douglas J. (Lanark-Renfrew PC)  
**Wong, Hon. Robert C.**, Minister of Energy  
 (Fort York L)  
**Wrye, Hon. William**, Minister of Consumer and  
 Commercial Relations (Windsor-Sandwich L)

\*The alphabetical list of members appears in each issue. Lists of the members of the executive council, parliamentary assistants and members of committees, brought up to date as necessary, are published in Hansard in the first and last issues of each session and on the first sitting day of each month.



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No. 110

# Hansard

## Official Report of Debates

### Legislative Assembly of Ontario

**First Session, 34th Parliament**  
Thursday, November 24, 1988



Speaker: Honourable Hugh A. Edighoffer  
Clerk of the House: Claude L. DesRosiers

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Contents of the proceedings reported in this issue of Hansard appears at the back, together with an alphabetical list of members of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Thursday, November 24, 1988

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayers.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

#### NONGOVERNMENTAL VOLUNTARY AGENCIES

Mr. McClelland moved resolution 51:

That, in the opinion of this House, the government of Ontario should establish a framework within which a working partnership can be initiated and maintained on an ongoing basis with nongovernmental voluntary agencies involved in international relief and development.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member has up to 20 minutes to make his presentation and may reserve any portion of it for the windup.

**Mr. McClelland:** I want at the outset to put my resolution in somewhat of a context that may be helpful for my colleagues in this House, and indeed, for the people of Ontario.

Our government has recognized that we have an important role to play in international relations, particularly in the area of Third World and developing nations. Our Premier (Mr. Peterson) has initiated an inventory, a comprehensive review of what we are doing on the international scene with a view to having a holistic approach and analysis of the involvement of this government on the international scene as it pertains to Third World countries and our involvement therein.

Ontario is, in my opinion and, I think, the opinion of my colleagues in this House, among the finest places in the world to live. We enjoy one of the highest standards of living in this world and we are a very privileged people. We also have a proud history of being involved in a compassionate sense in responding to crisis situations around the world. It is on that foundation that this resolution is presented this morning.

Not only do we have a history of assisting our friends internationally in being a significant player on the international scene, but Ontario also has a historic and a current significant involvement in promoting international trade and involvement with Third World countries.

I made reference a moment ago to our government's involvement in the area of relief, particularly in situations of disaster. Two current ones that come to my mind, and certainly to the minds of my colleagues in this House, are recent initiatives and contributions in response to the devastation of hurricane Gilbert and, more recently, the devastation of hurricane Joan in Central America.

We have generously responded in situations like that as a government and, I think more important, as a people in this province. We have donated funds. We have donated goods in kind and seen to their distribution in those areas that have been adversely affected by international disaster.

One of the concerns I have is that our involvement is often done in a crisis response; if you will—that we do it for the most part on an ad hoc basis. We have a policy of looking at international situations that require assistance, making an evaluation of the appropriateness of our contribution and responding. And, as I said earlier, we generally respond very generously.

My intention for this resolution, I think, is fairly clear. What I would hope is that our government would begin to move on completion of the inventory and the overview that is being taken now with respect to our involvement in international relief and development to establish an ongoing relationship with nongovernmental agencies.

I want to address at the outset some concerns that have been raised, I think genuine concerns, by some of my colleagues in this House. I have been asked if it would in fact create just another level of bureaucracy. Would we effectively be just setting up another arm of government that is not necessary?

I want to say very clearly in my opinion that what we would be doing by setting up an ongoing working relationship with nongovernmental organizations is in fact maximizing the utilization of the resources that we currently distribute to Third World and developing nations. It seems to me that those people who are involved on a continuing basis, those involved in agencies working around the world, have a much better sense of the immediate needs in communities and



in the situations in those countries. They have, effectively, their fingers on the pulse of those communities.

More important, and I do not say this in any offhanded sense, rather than just plug money into a situation, those agencies and those involved in Third World relief and development, NGOs, on an ongoing basis are there for the long term. They are there to make sure we are not just doing Band-Aid work but trying to build a foundation and establish long-term relief and development.

I think the thrust of this government can be one of promoting and really looking at our involvement for long-term, sustainable development in those countries that need it.

We, as a government, provide generously in terms of expertise, employees to nations that request our assistance. We have been quick to second staff in projects, lending our expertise from the Ministry of Health, for example. My colleague the member for Guelph (Mr. Ferraro), the parliamentary assistant for the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Technology, is very much aware of our involvement in Third World countries with respect to the development of our trading relationship and really using our international profile in developing a network of international monetary exchange with countries that are in the early stages of developing their economy.

We share our expertise, we share our money and we respond in, I think, a very positive way, and it is within that context that the Premier has directed a review of what our government has been doing to date. Upon completion of that review, I would hope that, in response to this resolution, we would be prepared, as a government, to say, "Yes, we have a formal role to play in the world."

**1010**

Not only has our government been involved. I think that, as representatives of the people of Ontario, we should look at what the people have been doing. Many of Ontario's residents give extremely generously in terms of their time and money to nongovernmental agencies and international voluntary development organizations. In 1985, approximately \$35 million was distributed by the people of this province to international relief and development. I am told that this year we can expect somewhere in the order of \$50 million from the people of this province. I think that speaks very well for the generosity and spirit of the people of our province.

I think it is also noteworthy that many of Ontario's residents come from developing na-

tions around the world, and they are providing the economic prosperity of this province. As they do that, we have the opportunity to enhance our linkage with the nations they represent.

Because of our blessed—and I use that word advisedly—situation in the world, I think we have a corresponding responsibility. In the light of that responsibility, I hope that we will look at what we can do on a long-term basis. We have a role of leadership to play internationally and certainly in this country. Other provinces in this country have formalized their involvement and commitment to the intent of the resolution we have before us this morning. Ontario, as the strongest economic component of this great country, ought to be in a position of leadership.

Many of us know that Ontario, if it stood alone as a country, would be approximately the 11th-largest economy in the world. Clearly we have an international role and we are to be considered on the international stage as a very significant player.

Our businesses in this country as well benefit very much from our role and our corresponding role with respect to international development.

As we benefit as a country, as a nation and as a people, I would say we also have a responsibility to address the environmental concerns we espouse in this country and in this province. We have shown leadership in our province, I believe, in the area of environmental concerns, but we also live in a global scene. We live in a shrinking world. The pressures that we are facing environmentally on the global scene are most significant.

Part of the reason for the difficulties we are facing internationally is the pressures that are brought to bear on people in developing nations. We often lament, for example, the quick destruction of the rain forests in Brazil, yet it is virtually impossible for us to speak with any sense of optimism that the problem can be addressed and stopped until the people of that country are in a position where they do not have to strip the forests for simple survival.

I think what we can do by assisting international relief and development—and the key word is long-term development—is to assist them in developing an economy and a structure that are sustainable in an environmentally and economically sound fashion. Our businesses benefit. We draw a lot of money from Third World countries. Our people benefit.

We have a history that I think has laid the foundation very clearly for our government's involvement. I hope my colleagues in this House will join in supporting this resolution.



I am very concerned about our role as a government. I believe, as I have said many times this morning, that we have a tremendous opportunity to play a major role in helping people, helping our fellow man and mankind worldwide, and doing that in a significant, long-term way. One of the ways we can do that is by utilizing the existing agencies that are doing outstanding work and contributing to them in a meaningful way. I would be pleased if the resolution passed and set the framework upon which our government would move to establishing an ongoing relationship.

A colleague from our caucus will be speaking shortly, and any time that is left over I would like to reserve to address some of the comments by my friends opposite.

**Mr. Wildman:** I rise in support of the resolution presented by the member for Brampton North (Mr. McClelland). I must say that the resolution is worded somewhat vaguely. I was hoping that in the member's comments he might have been a little more specific as to what kind of framework he envisaged to allow for ongoing aid involving the nongovernmental agencies with the government of Ontario for Third World assistance.

I support the member's sentiments and congratulate him for his sincerity in presenting the resolution. I would agree with him in what I think is his view that this aid should be humanitarian in the first sense and should not be ideologically driven or economically driven from our point of view; that it should not just be Band-Aids, and that it should respond to the ongoing need of assistance for economic and social development in the Third World.

As the member indicated, we have a commendable record in this House of responding to disasters. We have had recently the example of the relief effort on behalf of Ontario in response to the hurricane that devastated Jamaica. I think that is a good example of how we do respond to disasters, but then the question arises as to what happens afterward for the ongoing economic development of the community involved, and I agree with the member.

I must say, though, that I was disappointed at the length of time it took for this House and the government of Ontario to respond to a similar disaster in Nicaragua. I suspect that the length of time it took had something to do with the ideology of that government as opposed to that of the Jamaican government. I think that is most unfortunate. I am glad that we have finally

responded, and responded in a significant way, to the hurricane disaster in Nicaragua.

In that particular case, if I were to use that as an example, I understand there was something in the neighbourhood of \$800 million in damage done to an economy that is very fragile in the first place, damage to buildings, homes, many people left homeless, communities that were completely obliterated by an enormous natural disaster.

I heard this morning on the radio on my way to the House that the disaster has been shown to have been even worse than was first suspected. Apparently, a tropical rain forest in Nicaragua of over 10,000 square kilometres was completely flattened, and it is only recently that this has become known, because the area is so remote and inaccessible. This area is larger than Prince Edward Island. There has been an enormous loss. That \$800 million I mentioned before does not include the loss related to the destruction of this rain forest—a tremendous economic loss with enormous ancient mahogany trees that have been blown over and completely flattened. Unless this timber is salvaged immediately, it will rot and there will be millions of dollars lost.

Also, of course, with the destruction of this kind of forest, we are going to see meteorological changes in Nicaragua in the future. A large number of endangered species, such as jaguars, have been killed by this destruction, and those that survived have left the area and will not return because there is no habitat surviving for them to live in.

#### 1020

I would prefer if we could be a little more specific in the House this morning. I would like the members of this House to express the view that we should respond immediately in Canada, since we have the expertise for roadbuilding in the wilderness and we certainly have the expertise for harvesting the forest, so that we could mount an immediate salvage operation in co-operation with our Nicaraguan friends so that the enormous economic value of the mahogany and the other timber that has been destroyed could be salvaged.

Then we could move from there, in co-operation with the nongovernmental agencies and with the Canadian government as well as other governments in the hemisphere and in Europe, using our expertise for a regeneration effort in the area that has been destroyed. We have the expertise. In most cases in the Third World they have the manpower and, if given the training and the technological assistance, they can do a great deal for themselves.



We have seen over the last 20 to 25 years what is called the green revolution in India. I can remember in the 1950s and 1960s predictions of enormous famine in the subcontinent, but because of the efforts of the world community—and I am not talking just about government agencies but also about nongovernmental agencies—we harnessed the agricultural expertise and the economic expertise and we have, indeed, a green revolution in the subcontinent to the point where India now exports foodstuffs. That is the kind of miracle that can be worked if we have the proper framework and the proper desire to assist Third World countries to develop and to provide for their own needs in their own ways.

I am fully in support of the resolution. I do reiterate that I would prefer for it to be a little more specific. To say that we are in favour of a framework does not really say a great deal. How is this framework to work? How are we, as a provincial government, to be able to co-operate with the federal government, the federal government's international agencies, the nongovernmental agencies both in our own province and in our own country, and the international agencies such as the international Red Cross, the economic development agencies at the United Nations and the World Council of Churches and other charitable organizations such as that?

How would this framework work? I would hope that we would get some indication during the debate. I am not suggesting that we will know definitively, but I would like to know how it might work. I would reiterate as well that I believe the news that we heard this morning about the devastation in Central America gives us an opportunity once again to show how generous the people of Ontario can be in assisting people who have experienced enormous dislocation and devastation.

I call on the provincial government to respond positively and swiftly to the news that the rain forest has been destroyed and to try to provide not only the expertise and the technological assistance but also the equipment that would be needed to build the roads into an inaccessible area to harvest the mahogany and the other timber, and then to move on from there to ensure that there is a proper regeneration effort for replanting in that area. I think we can do it. I think that would be a concrete way of demonstrating what I think is the sentiment of all members of the House in favour of this resolution.

I would like to move beyond just expressing goodwill and desire to do something to actually

doing something; and I think not only do we have the money and the capital, we have the knowledge, the technology and the ability, if we wish, to help the Nicaraguans meet this terrible crisis.

**Mr. Runciman:** I appreciate the opportunity to participate in this debate. I came here this morning really uncertain about what position I might take, and our caucus has not taken a formal position on the member's resolution. I was hoping that his leadoff comments would convince me that this was the appropriate thing for this Legislature to be doing, and I must say that, up to this point, I have not been convinced.

It is kind of a motherhood issue, and it is difficult. I even see a group of people supporting it my own church, the Presbyterian church. I am going to have difficulty voting against my own church, but I am prepared to do that if I do not feel comfortable, and I hope the member can give me a higher comfort level than he has to this point.

The member for Algoma (Mr. Wildman) was talking about specifics, and I think that is a very valid concern. There is really nothing in this, and certainly nothing in terms of the comments of the member who opened the debate, other than saying something about Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, but not really giving specifics of how he thinks this sort of thing might operate.

I guess a bit of confusion enters my mind in respect to my period as Minister of Government Services. I know, going back a number of years, the Ministry of Government Services has been very much involved in providing aid, especially in the Caribbean basin. This was initiated a number of years ago, primarily with the very energetic support of Clare Westcott in Premier Davis's office.

I know that the ministry, on a regular basis, was supplying surplus goods and medical supplies to a host of Caribbean countries, and it has not been exclusively to the Caribbean. I know there are other instances where Third World countries have also been the beneficiaries of assistance from the Ontario government funnelled through the Ministry of Government Services.

Perhaps that framework is already in existence and it needs some refining, some modification, some enhancement, perhaps some modest enlargement, I am not sure. Perhaps the member himself is not aware of that activity of that ministry. It is certainly something that does not receive and has not received a great deal of publicity over the past 10 or 15 years.



I am not sure if the ministry currently is as actively involved as it has been in the past. I know from my own experience that the driving force, and the member of the administration who made sure that it continued to play an active role, was Clare Westcott, who was constantly at the ear of the Minister of Government Services to make sure that surplus goods, etc., were supplied to countries in need in the Caribbean especially.

**Mr. Wildman:** It certainly was nonideological, as I suggested.

**Mr. Runciman:** Very much so, and one of my regrets in leaving the ministry was that one of the opportunities that ministers of government services consistently had over the years was to travel to the Caribbean to visit the various countries, accompanying the delivery of surplus goods. I know from talking to some of my colleagues who served in that role in the past that it was a very enjoyable, worthwhile learning experience for them, and the recipients of the assistance from Ontario were always most grateful. As the members have said, especially in the Caribbean, Ontario and Canada have a real sense of good feelings. There is a well of good feelings in the Caribbean towards this country and towards the province.

I want to talk about a couple of other things, since I have the opportunity in respect to this bill, and those are the priorities of the government.

The member has talked about assistance to Third World countries, and there is no question that we want to be involved in providing that kind of assistance. But at the same time, we can talk about agencies or groups in this province who are requiring assistance and are certainly not being totally ignored but are not being given the audience that is, in my view, justified.

I want to zero in on one specific group which I think relates in some respect to this resolution. That is the volunteer bureaus in this province.

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I think there are something like 37 of them. I know one in my own community has been in operation for a great many years and has been dealing with the provincial government. We have no ministry in the provincial government that wants even to acknowledge their presence, let alone accept any responsibility for assistance. We can take a look at the fight that has been going on for the past two or three years between the Ministry of Community and Social Services and the Ministry of Citizenship and Culture. We have the minister of that portfolio here today.

They have been looking for some modest core funding to allow the volunteer bureaus to

continue to operate in this province. Without any core funding assistance, the volunteer bureau in my area is probably going to disappear early in the new year. They provide assistance to the most needy in our communities, people who simply do not have the resources. If there is an illness in the family, for example, those suffering from cancer who have to travel to Kingston 50 or 60 miles away, they provide transportation for them. They provide services for families, a whole range of important services that are provided on a volunteer basis. I want to emphasize that.

This government has totally, for the most part, ignored that very, very valuable service and is talking instead about co-ordinating efforts to spend more money on Third World countries. That has to raise some eyebrows around the province. The member talked about crisis response. It is totally crisis response on an ad hoc basis. As I said earlier, we have had services provided on an ongoing basis through the Ministry of Government Services and, indeed, we are reacting to a tornado in Nicaragua and devastation in Jamaica on an ad hoc basis, but I do not think there is anything inappropriate about that. These are particular cases where a country has suffered because of a storm, a tornado or what have you—a natural disaster. There is a very immediate need for assistance, and Ontario has been receptive over the years, as has the government of Canada. I see nothing wrong with that.

I see what he is getting at in terms of having some sort of ongoing framework, but I think, as I have already emphasized on a number of occasions, that is already in place and perhaps needs some refinement, but it is there. A concern of mine, and the member attempted to address it, is the question of bureaucracy. He assures us that the establishment of something like this, apparently separate from the Ministry of Government Services, is not going to result in the growth of a new government bureaucracy. I have some trouble with that. I know these empires tend to start small. Once a bureaucrat gets an office and a secretary, there is always the pressure, in most instances, to want to enhance his or her own importance and salary. That results in the gradual growth of his or her responsibilities and the consequent parallel growth in the cost to government and the taxpayers of this province.

He talked about no funding. Sure, no funding at the start. I guess we could look at this as a carrot in this instance. He is frowning. Maybe I misinterpreted what he was saying in respect to funding. He will have an opportunity to address



these concerns later on. Again, I think history proves me correct with regard to any assistance, any framework like this that starts with no funding or providing assurances of no funding. Once established, pressures will begin to grow in respect to additional needs that will be found, and demands and pressure, etc., will continue to grow in respect to funding eventually being provided.

If indeed he is saying that no funding will be required, I think whenever this sort of framework is put in place it also has to include some sort of binding requirement that indeed we are not going to be giving any serious consideration to future funding requests that may be generated after the establishment of the framework and the individuals who will be serving within that framework.

I took a look at the list of sponsors again, and by and large they are very credible and worthwhile agencies. There are a number in there—I will not get into specifics—that do cause me some concern. Making an exception to that, I will mention one, and that is Canadian University Service Overseas. I think that when we take a look at what is happening in respect to all of these agencies working throughout a framework, I think it is valuable, but we have to take a look at some of the positions they take that may be very much in violation of the way most Canadians and Ontarians feel.

**Mrs. Cunningham:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of privilege: I would ask that I be allowed to speak to this motion. I think the member for Brampton North would allow me a few minutes of his time.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. M. C. Ray):** The next speaker we have is the member for York North (Mr. Beer). We are going in rotation according to the allotted time, and if there is sufficient time, the member will be able to speak in due course. For now, the member for York North.

**Mr. Beer:** I rise in support of the resolution. In my remarks I would like to address some of the comments that have been raised about the framework and about the nature of that framework, because I think there are some models that we can look at which would meet some of the concerns that were raised by my colleague the member for Algoma.

I would like to say at the outset as a former volunteer with CUSO that I think it is an excellent organization that does extremely fine and good work in many parts of the world. Indeed, when one looks at the organizations in Ontario that are members of the Canadian

Council for International Co-operation, and thereby of the Ontario group, there are some 67. It is really a remarkable collection of all of the major churches and major voluntary organizations that exist within our country here in our province. I think the kind of work they are doing in the area of international development and relief work is first-rate.

As perhaps some members are aware, there are a number of provinces that are already involved in this kind of work and have created the means of carrying it out. British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Quebec are ones where I know they have established programs. They are not all operated in a similar fashion, although in the case of Saskatchewan and Manitoba I know that what they do there is that those governments, in effect, provide a percentage of funding to an umbrella organization that brings together all of the different Saskatchewan or Manitoba organizations involved in international relief and development.

In Alberta, essentially the way it works is that for every dollar the various groups raise within Alberta, the Alberta government matches that with a dollar and, if my understanding is correct, the Canadian International Development Agency then matches that, so in effect you have \$1 that comes from the community that drives another \$3 that come in and that produces the funding they have. In Alberta, as in the other provinces, they have laid out pretty clear criteria in terms of which nongovernmental organizations can participate. There is certainly solid protection in terms of the taxpayers' dollar.

The interesting thing here, and I think what is particularly creative and compelling for me in terms of Ontario following this route, is that the other element of all of this, beyond the help we are then able to give to people in other countries on specific projects, is that by working with the nongovernmental sector, by working with the voluntary sector, we are then bringing back to our own country knowledge, understanding and awareness of the problems in developing countries; and those people who are, of course, residents of Ontario, citizens of Canada, increasingly play a role and affect the way we look on the kinds of projects and programs that we want to be dealing with in the developing countries.

The member for Algoma mentioned—and it was a good example—India's progress over the last 25 years with respect to the green revolution. A great many people have been involved in that, but one of the groups, if you like, that has been very involved is the nongovernmental sector.



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Canada participated in this in terms of various groups that have worked in that area. Of course, the fact that they are not always government agencies that are doing it also means that there is less a sense that this is being done by huge entities or that there are all sorts of strings that are necessarily attached. It really is much more people working with people. Particularly in the agricultural and educational areas in Canada, I think we can look with some pride at what we have been able to accomplish through a number of nongovernmental groups.

The member for Leeds-Grenville (Mr. Runciman) mentioned some of the things which Clare Westcott was involved with a number of years ago in the educational area. I can remember at the time being in some respects linked in a little way to that. Basically, what we did was find out when a C-130 was leaving Trenton and going down to the West Indies. It would be a training flight and we would load it up with desks. There was an eyeglass program that was going on. There were a number of very innovative projects—low-key, if you like; not necessarily multibillion-dollar, but ones which had a real impact and a real people-to-people thrust.

Why then should—and it is a legitimate question—Ontario organize a specific framework in which to do this? I think it meets a couple of needs that we have. One is that as a province we do have expertise in certain areas. Yet, by dealing with it on a kind of ad hoc basis as we do now, I do not think we get the bang for the buck or bang for the program that we want to have and that we could have if we set out some criteria and worked with the Canadian Council for International Co-operation to set up a program whereby we would match dollars that were raised within Ontario by the various Ontario nongovernmental organizations. In that way, we could set out criteria. We could take advantage of the expertise which those nongovernmental bodies have and make sure that we do have some impact.

In a proposal that was put forward by the Canadian Council for International Cooperation, it not only has suggested how a framework might work but has even indicated dollars and percentages of government dollars that would go with private donations. So whether we are looking at it on a dollar-for-dollar match or a percentage match, we are looking at several millions of dollars, perhaps upwards, ultimately, in the \$20-million to \$30-million range, where we could be assisting nongovernmental groups with specific projects in developing countries.

If we work and if the framework is to work with the nongovernmental sector and really have it administering the program, then we would avoid the problem of setting up a large bureaucracy, which is really not what we want to get into and, indeed, not what the nongovernmental organizations want to get into. I think if you look at most of the major nongovernmental groups, particularly the ones that participate in the Canadian Council for International Cooperation, they are very concerned about getting the money out into the project. They try to keep their administrative costs very low. I know Oxfam, which a number of members may have had some connection with, is very, very good at cutting down on its administrative costs and ensuring that the dollars that it spends are spent for the purposes it was set up for.

It is that kind of a co-operative mould, if you will, that I think will work. It will also mean—and I think, again, in terms of the member for Algoma's concerns about how we react to crises such as that in Nicaragua—that we have a better focus. When something like that happens, while this nongovernmental group can be dealing on an ongoing and long-term basis with specific projects, it can also help us in reacting to the kinds of problems that are caused by disasters, where we need to come together quickly with the Red Cross and with other organizations that are at work in these countries.

I see a net benefit in terms of how we organize and how we expend our funds for development work; I see a net benefit in helping the nongovernmental organizations which, of course, are made up of Ontario residents, Canadian citizens, and I see a net benefit for our province and for our country in that the skills and the expertise which our people are both taking out to other countries and bringing back makes us, as a nation, a much stronger one as we try to come to grips with this world that grows ever smaller and where we have a responsibility to participate and work with our fellow men and our fellow women in the developing countries.

**Mrs. Cunningham:** I am pleased to rise in the House today and speak on the resolution of the member for Brampton North. The Ontario government has recently demonstrated its commitment to assisting people in Third World countries, providing emergency assistance to hurricane victims in Jamaica, Nicaragua and Bangladesh. I am proud to see that Ontario can be counted on and is committed to international development and assistance.



The government currently provides support to relief funding on an ad hoc basis. This resolution would establish a formal working partnership between nongovernmental voluntary agencies involved in international relief and development and the Ontario government. I am speaking in support of this motion with some reservations which I will share with the House at this time. Other provinces have taken the initiative to establish such working relationships. In trying to find out just how they did operate, we discovered that the Alberta government has an office of international aid and distributes just over \$3 million to nongovernmental organizations.

Saskatchewan and Manitoba operate on a smaller scale and provide just under \$1 million to these organizations. However, they do not have a specific office to administer the program. As my colleague the member for Leeds-Grenville would remind us, they do not have an additional bureaucracy and that is something we are all concerned about as we have spoken this morning. Instead, the nongovernmental organizations have committees which brief cabinet regularly. I think this is a very good model.

At the beginning of each year, the government commits a budget in support of relief funding and education—education in this instance refers to agencies which provide seminars and workshops to those interested in international debt and Third World countries—and the committee then submits a plan which illustrates the way in which the money is to be spent; a model worth looking at. I would like to stress that although Alberta seems to have an effective system in place, we should be striving for this model of Saskatchewan and Manitoba which I have just referred to. We do not need a larger bureaucracy. The one we have is already far too large.

The member for Brampton North should reassure us that his intent is to make certain that the committed dollars are to be spent on people and programs and not on administration. The London Cross Cultural Learner Centre is one of the 60 voluntary agencies involved in international development and education. It makes a wonderful contribution to our city and a wonderful contribution to world needs. It provides many services to the London community, including a newcomer and refugee resettlement program, temporary accommodation for refugees who are without a home, an interpreting service and many, many more support services.

These nongovernmental organizations are experts in their field, and I underline “experts.” We should be seeking their advice and supporting

their extraordinary work. We should establish a committee to regularly brief our government, offering expert information and advice. We should work with these agencies, including the Red Cross, as well as all of the agencies represented through the Ontario region of the Canadian Council for International Co-operation, to make certain that we are spending funds wisely and—underlined—efficiently. I am certain that there must be more administrative costs without the efficient framework that we are striving for today.

**1050**

Again, I commend the government for its ongoing practice of making funds available for emergency relief assistance and for our role in international development and education. However, in supporting a formal working partnership with nongovernmental voluntary agencies, my intent would be to clarify Ontario’s involvement in international activities, clearly understand our commitment, distribute our funds more efficiently and effectively and, above all, give recognized support through a formal working partnership to the many nongovernmental volunteer agencies for their expertise and tireless efforts in support of international development.

We would expect the member for Brampton North to formalize in writing the structure of this partnership and the objectives of the advisory committee so that as elected members of this parliament we will be accountable and able to explain to our citizens, the people we represent, just precisely our formalized working relationship and the functions of any committee we may be supporting.

I would like to thank the member for Brampton North for his resolution and for his intent and offer him my support in accomplishing this very worthwhile formalized working relationship with the many voluntary agencies in our province.

**Mr. McClelland:** At the outset, I want to thank my colleagues and honourable members of this House who have spoken this morning for the thoughtful concerns they have raised and certainly for their support of the sentiment and intent of the resolution.

I hope that some of the concerns that were initially raised may have been touched on by my colleague the member for York North. I want to thank him as well. I recognize that my colleague the member for London North (Mrs. Cunningham) also made some reference to the possible type of framework within which we might operate.



The member for Algoma asked that question at the outset, what type of framework we are talking about and exactly what I mean. I would say to him that one of the concerns I have, quite frankly, is that I do not see there is a great deal of merit in duplicating something that already exists. I too share the concerns of the member for Leeds-Grenville and the member for London North that there is no merit in reinventing the wheel. In wording my resolution, I did so with that in mind.

I would say quite candidly to my friend the member for Algoma that I cannot tell him with any absolute precision the type of structure that I would envisage. There are certain elements that I would like to address, one being the issue of duplication. The other is to recognize that the expertise that has been referred to by the member for London North and other members is already in place. In short, I see a linkage, if you will, and a co-ordinated effort that we can pull together. The member for Leeds-Grenville mentioned that we already do have an ongoing involvement in a significant way. In fact, that is the case. I understand there are at least 17 Ontario government ministries that are involved in one way or another in what may be either directly or loosely referred to as Third World relief and development.

It is with that in mind that I see the framework that I am talking about in this resolution as one of a co-ordinating office. Whether it be an office or an individual of the government, I think it is important to wait and see the results of the current comprehensive review that is being undertaken at the present time. A principle that would guide me in that framework is not to duplicate what already exists to maximize the delivery of those funds and those dollars that we do currently distribute in disasters.

The member for Leeds-Grenville mentioned that we do respond very well to international disasters and said that was entirely appropriate. I agree wholeheartedly. At the same time, my friend from Algoma mentioned that there are times when the timeliness of that response raises some very significant questions. It is with that in mind that I would hope we could establish some sort of formal ongoing relationship so that we are plugged in to those people who are in the field delivering service and that we can effectively and in a timely fashion utilize those funds.

I am not here to criticize the distribution of funds that our government recently sent to Jamaica. I am told by some people who perhaps should know better than I that much of the funds

was used effectively in setting up an administrative process that was already in place. That is one of the concerns that I have, that if we respond to international disasters on an ad hoc basis without an ongoing structure, we in fact use resources that could be used much more wisely.

The working relationship that my friend the member for London North spoke about is essential. We have made reference to the commitment. Each of the members who have spoken today has said that the principles set out in the resolution are laudable.

I do not presume to stand here and say that I have all the answers as to how we would set it up. I think the way it has to be set up is with a view to maximizing what we are doing, to linking the efforts that this government and the people of this province have already undertaken and demonstrated their commitment to.

I am pleased to have the opportunity to present this resolution, and recognizing that perhaps it is not perfect in its wording, I want to talk to the intent of it and say that I think we have a responsibility as a people and as a government to be involved and to demonstrate the commitment of our involvement in the area of international relief and development.

I do believe, and it sounds almost trite to say, that as our world shrinks, we not only have an obligation but also a tremendous opportunity to show leadership in a compassionate, sensitive, wise and prudent way. Accordingly, I would ask the members of this House to support the resolution this morning.

#### ONTARIO ENERGY BOARD AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Charlton moved second reading of Bill 184, An Act to amend the Ontario Energy Board Act.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. M. C. Ray):** The member has 20 minutes for his presentation and he may reserve any portion thereof.

**Mr. Charlton:** It is always a pleasure to participate in the private members' portion of the operations of this Legislature. On the other hand, in introducing Bill 184 here in the House for the second year in a row—although it was not Bill 184 last year, but was essentially the same bill—it reflects on a problem that we have had in this institution for far too long.

Bill 184 is essentially a piece of legislation which would give to the Ontario Energy Board the authority, on the one hand, to regulate the rates that are charged by Ontario Hydro and, on the other hand, to have the authority to investi-



gate a number of matters that are parts of the operation and planning process of Ontario Hydro—matters of capacity, price and source of supply.

These are issues that have been controversial in Ontario for some 20 years now. When this government was elected, we heard a lot of talk about serious reform of the structures in which Ontario Hydro operates, around questions of accountability and regulation.

I think it would be fair to say that five or six years ago the issues dealt with in this bill could have been viewed as somewhat partisan in nature. They were opposed by the government of the day. They were supported by this party and have been for a long time. Parts of what is in this bill were, in fact, supported at that time by the present government, then in opposition.

It is also fair to say that the issues that are dealt with in this piece of legislation are no longer partisan issues. Each and every one of the items set out in this bill is based on the recommendations of the select committee on energy tabled in this House in July 1986 and supported by the members of that committee from all three parties.

I brought this bill forward last year because there was nothing forthcoming from the government. I brought it forward again this year because there is still nothing forthcoming from the government.

**1100**

I would like to start out by dealing with the issue of regulating hydro rates. In spite of what some of the public think in terms of the fairness or unfairness of hydro rates in Ontario, it becomes a very complex issue that does not deal just with what Ontario Hydro's costs are this year. The rate structure at Ontario Hydro is a rate structure that has evolved over 70 years. It is also a rate structure that is very complex internally and is substantially affected by decisions that were made 20 years ago, which are obviously far beyond our control at this stage.

The process starts with the way in which a utility—Ontario Hydro in this case—approaches the whole question of system planning and the mandate that is set out for it in legislation. Currently, under the power commission legislation in this province, Ontario Hydro is mandated to provide power to the people of Ontario at cost, and technically it accomplishes that goal. However, they do that by charging some people more than cost and others less than cost, so that the average price Hydro charges reflects the cost of producing that energy.

We have a rate structure that some of the Liberal members will recall one of their colleagues pursued with vehemence over the years. The former member for Grey-Bruce, Eddie Sargent, a friend of many of us, for many years pursued the issue of the declining rate structure. The declining rate structure is a structure that allows Ontario Hydro to charge those who use the least power in this province the highest rate for each kilowatt-hour they consume, while those who consume the most pay the least per kilowatt-hour.

I think you understand, Mr. Speaker, that inevitably that means those in this province who are conscientious enough to spend money on conservation pay more as a result. Those in this province who use less power because they are poor and therefore shut their lights off regularly, use their stove as little as possible, keep their hot-water heater set low and whatever else pay more per kilowatt-hour as a result.

Then there are those who, because they can get the power so cheap, have no incentive to conserve and be efficient in their use of power. Yes, those huge industries rely on power, and yes, to be competitive they need to have power that is cheaper than our competing jurisdictions in the United States and elsewhere in Canada, but because it is so cheap they become inefficient in their use of power.

The householders in this province who pay the highest rates subsidize the inefficiencies of the rest of this society—the institutional, commercial and industrial sectors, with the industrial sector being the worst offender. It is also true that the declining rate structure is an overall disincentive to conservation.

Many members will recall that we have had an ongoing debate for some 15 years now about where we are going with our energy future and whether we want to build more nuclear plants in this province. We have heard from the member for London Centre (Mr. Peterson) on many occasions in this House, both when he was the Leader of the Opposition and even more recently as Premier, that he does not particularly want to see the construction of any more nuclear plants in this province.

When we are in a system that is designed to promote consumption, if we are not prepared to change that system to build in the incentives for conservation, then we are going to be in a position of doing things that none of us want to have to do. That does not seem to me to make a lot of sense.



This bill would pass to the Ontario Energy Board the authority to regulate hydro rates, to set those rates after a hearing. I would like to refer members to this report. Although they probably do not have it with them, they can perhaps jot down a note and take the time to read through some sections of the select committee report from July 1986, because I am going to read a couple of sections that refer specifically to the matters around rate-setting.

Recommendation 13 of that select committee: "The Minister of Energy should request the Ontario Energy Board to hold a public hearing to determine the price which best reflects the value of parallel generation to the system, and to determine the desirable amount of parallel generation that could be added to the system within the current planning horizon." The current planning horizon is the next 20 years.

The problem we have right now is that Ontario Hydro sets the rate it will pay to those who have gone out into the real world and developed small hydraulic sites that Ontario Hydro feels are too small and that it cannot be bothered operating. Hydro operated some of them in the past and shut them down. Others, they never bothered to operate.

We have small entrepreneurs in this province out there operating those very efficient and substantially environmentally safe small hydraulic sites. But Hydro pays those producers far less than what it would cost Hydro to build another major generation facility in this province. Hydro in fact pays those generators far less than the average cost on the system presently, because essentially it is in Hydro's best interest, and not necessarily in the province's best interest, to do so.

The decision-making around questions like parallel generation and industrial cogeneration, and what value that power has to the Ontario economy and to the Ontario electrical system has to be taken out of the hands of Ontario Hydro. The select committee was unanimous in making that recommendation.

Recommendation 16: "The Ontario Energy Board should be empowered to hold biannual public reviews of Ontario Hydro's resource development plan, and publish a public report with recommendations to cabinet."

That is the 16th recommendation of the select committee, 1986. It deals with an area where there presently is no formal process of review or regulation at all. The entire information process around Hydro's long-range planning, its 20-year planning, is completely contained within the

Hydro corporate structure. The Ministry of Energy presently has no significant ability to either do studies that check Ontario Hydro's data or to substantially challenge the results Hydro finds. Neither does any other organization or institution in this province. There are lots of organizations, institutions, consulting firms and so on that have the capability, given the opportunity, to do the job, but there are presently none that do that job.

When Hydro presents its resource plan for the future to the government, we have made in the past what have been obviously very ineffective efforts to challenge parts of that, but there is no substantial ability to do that because there is no information base outside Ontario Hydro.

This recommendation is a recommendation that was intended to start to change that process, to bring the information out into the public domain so that in fact we would have a body of expertise outside of and independent of Ontario Hydro that could question and challenge the assertions being made by Ontario Hydro in terms of our future direction and the impacts that will have on us as individual consumers in this province and on our economy as a whole for the future.

Again, recommendation 16 was unanimously endorsed by all members of the select committee from all parties.

Recommendation 17: "The Ontario Energy Board should conduct a public review of the results of Ontario Hydro's demand and supply options study."

Unfortunately, that was another reference to the Ontario Energy Board that the government failed to accede to. We had a review again in a select committee earlier this year, in August and September. That committee hopefully will be reporting before Christmas, but again, although the select committee was able to acquire expertise in the form of consultants from outside of this place, we ended up with six weeks in which to do a job that probably requires six months of full-time work in terms of a hearing process.

Although I think that committee will come out with some good recommendations, the recommendations will be limited by the amount of time we had in the six weeks to look at a planning process that took Ontario Hydro three years to develop.

Recommendation 22 is the last recommendation I want to refer to from the select committee report and that is the recommendation that basically says, "The Ontario Energy Board Act should be amended to give the board the powers



to regulate electricity rates.” That is the very specific ability to deal not only with such questions as what the average hydro rate in this province should be, but also with such questions as whether the declining rate structure, which rewards the inefficient and penalizes the efficient, is an appropriate rate structure, or whether we should have a flat rate structure in this province with everybody paying the same rate, or whether we might even want to move, over time, to an inclining rate structure where those who are the most efficient are rewarded and those who are the least efficient are penalized.

Those are all questions I do not have answers to. I do not know what would be best in the long run for the Ontario economy and for the people of Ontario, but we need a structure that can look at those options, that can weigh those options and that can apply some expertise and understanding to those options, so that we are making the right decisions for the future of Ontario and not necessarily for the future of Ontario Hydro and its ledger books in terms of its revenue versus its debt.

We have a situation where everybody in this province has been talking about making Ontario Hydro accountable, bringing Ontario Hydro under control and regulating Ontario Hydro in a fashion that is in the best interests of the people of Ontario.

The governing party, when in opposition, took firm positions on these issues. This government, since attaining power in 1985, has said it is going to be the government to do exactly that: to make Ontario Hydro accountable and more publicly accessible in terms of those issues that are most important to our future. The current Minister of Energy (Mr. Wong) has said openly to the press that he is going to be the minister who brings Ontario Hydro under control, and yet we spend roughly \$1 million on a select committee study and it gets put on a shelf and nothing happens.

We do not need to study the studies; we have already done the studies. It is time to proceed to do what we have not only told the people of this province we are going to do, but what we have told each other we support wholeheartedly on behalf of the people of this province.

I would like to reserve the last three minutes of my time for the end of this debate.

**Mr. Cureatz:** It gives me a great deal of pleasure to stand in my place this morning to speak in favour of my colleague’s proposed bill. I have to say from the outset that I am suffering somewhat from a mild cold, so I cannot go in full flight—

**Mr. Mahoney:** Sam. I’m disappointed.

**Mr. Cureatz:** —as I am sure the member for Mississauga West would like me to, but I am saving my energy, because within two or three weeks I want to tell the Premier that I am against his Sunday shopping legislation. Of course, I want to save my energy so I can tell the Premier and the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley) that we do not want Metro’s garbage in my riding of Durham East or at the dump site.

Notwithstanding those concerns, it is interesting that we have some people in the galleries this morning who are wondering, I am sure, with great interest what this is all about. I want to give some depth, some history to this legislation. I know the people at home are busy working this morning, but many come up to me later and say, “We saw you on the rerun.” I think it is important for me to explain to everyone at home about Bill 184 and what it really means.

My colleague from the official opposition has adequately explained some of his concerns and how he has been working along these lines for a number of years. I want to tell all members of the assembly here that for the last 12 humble years that the good people of Durham East have sent me back to these hallowed chambers, I have sat on all the select committees on energy and Ontario Hydro, and what a learning experience it has been.

Goodness, I only have eight minutes left.

The interesting thing is that we did all kinds of studies and investigations in terms of the areas my colleague is centring in on. I can think of rate-setting and investigating Ontario Hydro. Looking back 12 years ago, I have to confess I probably was not sympathetic to those ideas.

As a newly elected member then and as we progressed through the various committees over the years, we had some interesting tours. Unlike going to Australia or New Zealand, we went to those glorious, fine places in Ontario like Deep River, where we investigated the Rolphoton nuclear plant. We had a wonderful, full-blown session with our House leader, who was then in opposition, the member for Renfrew North (Mr. Conway), and his constituents about the concerns they had. What a hot night we had. They were all up in arms and angry as heck. It is a wonder he ever got re-elected with their concerns about that nuclear plant there.

We travelled virtually over the top of the transmission lines of Ontario Hydro by helicopter, from the Toronto airport up to the Bruce Peninsula. The Environment critic for the third party, the member for Etobicoke-Lakeshore



(Mrs. Grier), and I were closely strapped into this helicopter through a horrendous rainstorm. We were holding each other for dear life, thinking we would lose our lives on top of the transmission lines.

The committee toured up to Elliot Lake just recently and met with the mayor, the union and the chamber of commerce. They expressed their concerns about the mining of uranium and the troubles for the miners over the years, and I think resolved a lot of the difficulties they had expressed about the mining of uranium; and expressed their support, I might add, for Ontario Hydro and nuclear power.

This all shakes down to the problem the government is going to have to face within three years. As critic for the Ministry of Energy, I have been more than patient and I will be for another year. They have a year yet to play around with what they are going to do with the demand for electricity.

To refresh everybody's memory, Ontario needs about 20,000 megawatts of electricity, more or less, a day; certainly at its peak. In the summer we saw that we had to have a cutdown of electricity because the demand was too great, with the heat spell and air-conditioning. In the wintertime, obviously, there are Christmas lights and the requirement for heat. In any event, we need 20,000 megawatts, of which more or less a third is produced by hydro power—water falling into the turbines, turning the turbines and making electricity—a third by coal and oil, and the other third by nuclear.

Right now we are meeting the requirement and we have a little bit of reserve. The question is, what do we do down the line to the year 2000? Everyone is looking into the crystal ball and some are saying we are going to be needing somewhere between 23,000 megawatts and 30,000 megawatts by the year 2000.

The recent select committee, over the past summertime and into the fall, had various witnesses come before it. I will tell members that we are going to be on the horns of a dilemma, if I can use that trite phrase, the reason being that we have concern about the production of electricity by fossil fuels. We all know why; and just to remind members, up the stack goes the smoke to cause acid rain.

1120

We are only now getting to grips at the federal level, both the United States and Canada, with how to handle that problem. With all due credit to the Minister of the Environment, of whom I have been critical from time to time, he has certainly

centred in on the area of acid rain as a banner-carrying concern of the government. Hydro has to consider what it is going to do about that aspect of it.

If the greenhouse effect continues, there is a possibility of lowering of water in the Great Lakes. That means the turbines will not be able to turn as fast. That means we will not be able to produce as much electricity as we are now, one third of it, by hydro power. Do members know what that means? That means we are going to have to look to nuclear. I know my colleague and his party are not supportive of that. Our party has always been supportive. It is going to be very interesting to see where the Liberal Party is going to come from. I give them a year because that is all they have got. Then, two years after that, before the election, they are going to have to decide which manner they are going to make available for the production of more electricity. To my way of thinking, it is going to have to be nuclear.

Indeed, there has been a great amount of concern that there can be conservation, and I give credit to Hydro. Over the last 12 years I have seen them move ever so slowly from their steadfast position. Now they are talking a little bit about conservation and a wee little tiny bit about cogeneration and allowing entrepreneurs the opportunity of harnessing some smaller rivers in Ontario for the production of electricity. But I do not think that harnessing will give us more than maybe 1,000 megawatts; at the most 1,000 megawatts from those small lakes, rivers and streams.

I only have two minutes left, but I have seen over the last 12 years something interesting about Hydro. Even I cannot believe I am now standing in my place and saying it, but I am now feeling a little uncomfortable about Hydro. It brings back to mind Julian Reed, who was a Liberal member in opposition for years, who used to say, "Ontario Hydro is out of control," and I thought he was a little exaggerated about it.

Now what does "out of control" mean? It does not mean that the people are whackos over at Hydro, as Frank Drea used to say. They are concerned, dedicated people, looking after probably the best electrical system in the world. What it does mean in terms of out of control is that they are answerable basically to the various departments within their own institution. After the 12 years, who did I see come before the committee again? Basically the same old gang from Ontario Hydro, talking basically the same old story with some movement, only I would think in some



cases in recognition of—yes, I have to admit—a change in government and maybe a new direction.

But governments change, as I found out. Ontario Hydro is still going to be there when these guys leave. There will come a time, mark my words—

**Mr. Mahoney:** I'll be here.

**Mr. Cureatz:** Steve, you are gone after the next election.

Now when these guys go, all of us have to make sure that there is a body that is going to be in existence to monitor what is taking place at Ontario Hydro, be it, as my colleague's explanatory note says, "to investigate matters such as capacity, price and source of supply."

That is why I am now supporting my colleague's legislation. I think it is time that we did. Goodness knows, we do not need another board or commission, but I think it is about time we did, to have a consistency of monitoring the concerns that we have about the method by which Ontario is going to be producing its electricity.

**Mr. South:** I would first like to thank the member for Hamilton Mountain (Mr. Charlton) for bringing this bill forward. I recognize that as the New Democratic Party's Energy critic, the member has taken a keen interest in energy matters for a number of years and as a member of the recent select committee he has made some very worthy contributions to our discussions about energy concerns. That is why the government appreciates his interest in the issues he brings forward with his bill.

We are always interested in hearing from the member for Hamilton Mountain and, for that matter, from all members on energy matters. I think we would all have to agree that the access to reasonably inexpensive electrical energy has been one of the keystones to the great success of Ontario Hydro as much of the industrial engine of Ontario.

This is why this government has initiated such an extensive process for reviewing and opening up the whole Ontario Hydro planning process. We want to be sure that all opinion is taken into consideration as we work to open up the Ontario Hydro planning process and make Hydro more responsive to the concerns of the public and this government.

That being said, to support this bill now would be to deal only with certain specific, although high profile, aspects of Ontario Hydro and the Ontario Energy Board. There are many other aspects in this complex Ontario Hydro that have to be considered. This government does not want

to deal with these specific items in isolation. This government plans to deal with the electrical issues addressed in Bill 184 in the context of its methodical approach to making Ontario Hydro more responsive to the concerns of the public and of the government and to opening up the Ontario Hydro planning process.

Part of the planned approach are comprehensive reviews of and amendments to the Power Corporation Act and the Ontario Energy Board Act, but before I delve into the process that we have undertaken, I want to talk about the current situation. I would like to describe how electricity rates are set.

At present, the Ontario Energy Board conducts independent public hearings into any proposed changes in Ontario Hydro's bulk power rates to municipal utilities and direct industrial customers. These hearings take place at the direction of the minister and have historically taken place on an annual basis. These hearings are an essential element of the process in that they do provide a forum for the public to challenge Ontario Hydro. While the rate review process is complex, some consumer groups have developed expertise in it and they make worthy representation before the board on these Hydro hearings. Interveners, such as Energy Probe, the Consumers' Association of Canada, major power users and municipal utilities, as well as board staff, look after the public interest.

While the Ontario Energy Board's recommendations on electricity rates are advisory, Hydro's board of directors does take them into careful consideration. It is important to point out at this stage that there is further public input. Hydro's board of directors is a publicly appointed board.

I would like to now address the methodical review process that this government and the Ministry of Energy began last year. I will outline the steps that we have taken so far and those we plan to take. These are steps that will lead to a more open electricity planning process and a more responsive Hydro.

First, the Power Corporation Act review: In response to the final report and recommendations in 1986 of the select committee on energy, which has been referred to by the member for Hamilton Mountain, the Ministry of Energy began a major review of the Power Corporation Act last year. It is the intention of the Minister of Energy to soon introduce a bill in this Legislature to amend the Power Corporation Act. I want to assure the members that the goal of these amendments is to make Hydro more responsive to government policies and to public priorities.



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Second, with regard to Ontario Hydro's draft demand/supply planning strategy, last year the ministry also began reviews of that strategy, commonly known as the DSPS. One of these reviews was conducted by a dozen government ministries and another by an independent technical advisory panel. They looked at a number of factors that are high on the government's and the public's list of concerns. Among other things, they examined the issues of environmentally sound planning, conservation and efficiency, the maintenance of the Candu nuclear energy option and linkages with provincial economic development objectives.

The results of both reviews were submitted to the select committee on energy, which had determined that its first priority was to examine Hydro's DSPS. This is the first time that a plan of Ontario Hydro has been put before such intensive cross-examination by some of the finest minds available, including those of the public. To further encourage this in-depth examination of Hydro's DSPS, we have acted to provide the examiners with every piece of information possible. For example, the Electricity Planning Technical Advisory Panel to the Minister of Energy recommended a thorough inquiry into Candu nuclear costs before any new commitment is made to the nuclear option.

This review of Candu costs is now under way. It will carefully examine Hydro's nuclear cost projections against other key electricity supply alternatives, such as fossil fuel or hydroelectric generation. It will also address the public concern about costs associated with decommissioning nuclear reactors and nuclear waste disposal. We are planning a study which will examine the social and environmental aspects of the Candu nuclear program and key alternatives.

Once all the reviews, including the review by the select committee, are complete, Ontario Hydro will be asked to submit alternative system development plans. This submission will include Hydro's preferred plan. These plans will reflect not only Ontario Hydro's interpretation of the reviews of the DSPS, but also guidance given Ontario Hydro by the government. This guidance, in turn, will be based on the present three reviews of DSPS and on past reviews and independent analysis conducted for and by the Ministry of Energy.

I would like to point out that Ontario Hydro already does many things right and, in the areas where the government wants change, is beginning to make change. This government would

like to see more. Hydro can be an important tool for economic development for Ontario, a fact noted by the Premier's Council in its report on Hydro. In recent years, Hydro's purchasing people have begun to target key areas in which their procurement decisions can encourage opportunities for Ontario manufacturing. This is one of the most powerful economic tools at Hydro's disposal.

This government wants Hydro to go further than it has indicated. To support this bill now, though, would be to thwart the extensive, methodical process this government has set in place. We would like the Legislature to review the comprehensive package that we will be bringing forward in the very near future. The goal of this package is to enshrine structural changes in Hydro's planning process and to make Hydro more receptive to government and to public concerns.

**Mr. Morin-Strom:** I am pleased to be able to speak to Bill 184, the bill that my colleague the member for Hamilton Mountain has presented to the Legislature. Certainly private members' business is a very important part of the Legislature, one which does not get the attention it should, particularly from the government we have been facing over the last year since the Liberals won their majority government.

In fact, I think it is an abuse of that governmental power when we have a parliamentary assistant stand up and make an address on a bill like this and speak not for himself as a private member, as is supposed to be happening on this bill, but instead come to a conclusion which is a government conclusion and state that the government feels this and that in terms of this bill.

This is supposed to be private members' business and this member should be dealing with what he feels about this bill and whether it is a good bill or a bad bill and what should be done about it. He should not be a spokesman for cabinet in terms of a government position, on which he then dictates to the other private members in the government party on this particular bill. I think that is an affront to this Legislature; an affront to the whole principle of private members' business.

This bill in fact is quite a simple bill. It proposes to make four changes which had been endorsed not only by members of our party but by members of all parties in a select committee report on energy in this province that was completed in July 1986. That committee arose out of an accord item when the Liberals took



power from the previous Conservative government in the minority government of 1985.

The select committee on energy at that time looked extensively at a wide range of areas of concern in terms of energy generation in Ontario and the role that Ontario Hydro was playing in terms of energy and in terms of the economy of the province as a whole. The recommendations of that committee were extensive, and this particular bill primarily deals with four recommendations in the final report, July 1986 recommendations that were agreed to by every member of that committee. These recommendations were unanimous, agreed to by the Liberal members of that committee at that time.

I would just like to look at what some of those recommendations were. We are not asking for an endorsement of every one of the recommendations through this. This is an attempt to get some of the substantive items out of that report passed by this Legislature so that we can have some say in what Ontario Hydro is doing and ensure that Ontario Hydro's activities are going to be to the benefit of the people of Ontario.

The first recommendation, number 13 from the compendium of recommendations, reads as follows: "The Minister of Energy should request the Ontario Energy Board to hold a public hearing to determine the price which best reflects the value of parallel generation to the system, and to determine the desirable amount of parallel generation that could be added to the system within the current planning horizon."

Certainly we all know the concerns in terms of our energy future, the concerns about the possibility of having to go with future major installations of nuclear- or coal-powered generation, and the fact that much cheaper sources of energy could be found if we promoted the possibilities of cogeneration and of private, independent generation of power across Ontario. It is the low-cost alternative and we should not be in a situation where Ontario Hydro is discriminating and paying less than its own cost of energy for other sources that potentially are there in terms of cogeneration and independent generation of power. Ontario Hydro should have a mandate to provide power in the most efficient, effective way possible across this province. This recommendation, which was endorsed by all members of the committee, is one which we expect that all members, in addressing this bill today, would come to agree with.

**1140**

This bill also would ensure that adequate public reviews of Ontario Hydro do take place,

endorsing again recommendations 16 and 17 from the compendium of recommendations that the Ontario Energy Board should be empowered to hold biannual public reviews of Hydro's resource development plan. The other one is that the Ontario Energy Board should conduct a public review of the results of Hydro's Demand-Supply Options Study. Certainly the Ontario Energy Board should be the one conducting a serious, extensive review of the direction in which Hydro is planning to take this province. The concept of Hydro being totally independent of any public responsibility is one which we cannot continue to live with.

The final recommendation, and perhaps the most significant one that would be endorsed by the passage of this bill, is recommendation 22 from the select committee report. It reads, "The Ontario Energy Board Act should be amended to give the board the powers to regulate electricity rates." Certainly we know the kinds of problems that have been created by Hydro. We have situations of discriminatory rates, where rural rates are much higher than urban rates, where rates in the north are higher than rates in southern Ontario, where rates to small customers are higher than rates to large customers. When we have customers or firms or individual households that are conserving energy and keeping their amounts of energy down, they are penalized with a higher rate than the massive users which are using the vastly greatest amounts of energy across the province.

The ability to regulate electricity rates is particularly important if we, in fact, are going to use Hydro as a tool for economic development in this province. Certainly why should we not? We as a province, as a people, own and control Hydro. Why would we not use that for the best interests of the province as a whole? There is much that could be done in terms of stimulating economic activity in various areas of this province—I would refer particularly to northern Ontario—that would be of benefit to regions that do not have the kinds of diversified economy, that do not have the balanced economy, that do not have the low rates of unemployment that we have here in Metropolitan Toronto.

Hydro should be used as a tool for economic development. In areas like northern Ontario, we pay a tremendous penalty for the geography of the region, for the distances that are involved, for the climate that results in higher energy costs through the winter months. Energy, being a major component of the cost of doing business, is one of the real disadvantages and really discour-



aging factors that results in less economic activity occurring in the north than might take place if we had an aggressive government policy that did stimulate economic activity in that area. One of the key areas that can be easily put within the realm of control of this province is energy pricing. We should be doing that through the tool of controlling the prices that Hydro is charging and using that as a major economic development tool.

I would ask that all members of this Legislature respect this proceeding as private members' business and do what is best for the people of this province, not what is the perspective of just the cabinet minister responsible, and endorse this bill.

**Mr. Runciman:** The member for Durham East (Mr. Cureatz), our party's critic for the Ministry of Energy—and he is full of energy, as we all know—indicated that we are going to be supporting the legislation. We do not necessarily agree with all of the positions of the official opposition in respect to Ontario Hydro and the generation options available to the province, but indeed, with this particular piece of legislation, we find that we can very much support it.

I have to share the official opposition's regret in respect to the contribution made to this debate up to this point by the government representative, the parliamentary assistant for the Minister of Energy. I was hoping that the debate would be a harbinger of things to come in respect to the select committee's report, which we will begin to debate starting next Monday I believe, and that we would have an indication of just where the government would be coming from. If the parliamentary assistant's comments are any indication, it is going to be a very difficult time indeed with respect to coming to any unanimity in the committee in terms of meeting the future energy demands of this province.

Talking about the bill specifically, I think the select committee in 1986 clearly supported the recommendations that the member has incorporated in his bill. I want to say that giving the energy board the power to set the rates would be an effective mechanism to establish public control over Ontario Hydro, as it would, and I will quote the report, "Establish control over Ontario Hydro's costs; provide a check against the power of Ontario Hydro's board of directors to establish capital budgets; and to co-ordinate the planning and decision-making, linking the critical functions of planning and rate review."

There is no question that something is needed with respect to Ontario Hydro. It is a very large

bureaucracy, and the government seems to be having a very difficult time in coming to grips with the operation. In some respects that is understandable. I want to take a look at the lack of responsiveness on the part of the Ontario Hydro, and I will use as an example the Cresap study that was released some months ago, which pointed out in taking a look at only one aspect of Ontario Hydro's operations, that Ontario Hydro in that particular branch of the operation had over 2,000 redundant managers.

What was Ontario Hydro's response to that? They are simply going to keep these people on. They are going to look at, over a period of time and through attrition and what have you, being able to reassign these individuals with new responsibilities, and they think that is going to be adequate.

In the face of that report from Cresap, the consulting firm, they went ahead and made an announcement that they are going to construct a new edifice in honour of Ontario Hydro in North York, which is going to house approximately the same number of people that have been found to be redundant, a \$200-million-plus building in North York to house redundant managers.

Of course, the real difficulty with that is not simply top management's response to the Cresap study but also the fact that when you get out into the field in Ontario Hydro, especially going by the responses I am getting in eastern Ontario, they are facing manpower shortages and are not able to meet the demands that are placed upon them; but at the same time, we have redundant managers flooding the operation. Ontario Hydro seems to be simply unwilling to respond to those kinds of problems.

Another example is debt management. Approximately 50 per cent of Ontario Hydro's revenues are now going to service debt, but that is no problem as far as the management is concerned. It is certainly no problem in terms of the impact on the province's credit rating, obviously, simply because they are guaranteed payment, because the Hydro debt is guaranteed by the provincial government. I think that is wrong. I think that is something that we as a select committee will be taking a look at, and we have to have a much more responsive approach on the part of Ontario Hydro with respect to their very significant debt.

We talk about ways of reducing that debt. I suggested one in this House a number of months ago based on recommendations from North York Hydro. The fact is that the crown corporation has a United States debt of about \$9.5 billion.



Payment of that debt is based on the projection that the Canadian dollar, over this fiscal year, was going to be valued at about 75 cents in relation to the United States dollar. Well, as we all know, the Canadian dollar has been in the 80-cent-plus range for most of this year and obviously, on the basis of the election, is going to stay in that range for the remainder of this fiscal year.

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What does that mean to Ontario Hydro? It means a significant windfall to Ontario Hydro of well over \$100 million. The suggestion was, "Well, let's apply that one-time windfall to a significant reduction in their debt," but they are not even prepared to do that.

There is simply no recognition, no concern over there with respect to what is happening with the capital debt of Ontario Hydro. I think by accepting the member's proposal with Bill 184 and previous select committees' recommendations with respect to this, perhaps we are going to start to get some control over the operations of that crown corporation.

I personally have no real difficulty with this versus the government position and the seeming reluctance to transfer these kinds of responsibilities to the Ontario Energy Board; and that is difficult to understand when you take a look at what the government did in the last year with the auto insurance industry in this province. They had no reservations whatsoever about a massive intervention into the private sector in the auto industry and establishing the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board, which is doing what this member and the select committees of the past have suggested be done with the monopoly situation involving a crown corporation, but they have been reluctant to do it.

When you talk about the private sector, we have no trouble getting in there. The quasi-socialist bunch across the road is an antibusiness government and the business community knows it. They are going to feel it in the next provincial election as well. They are starting to recognize it.

The business community said in the past, "Well, this is an antibusiness government simply because of its reliance on the support of the New Democratic Party." Now it has been in office with a majority for 14 months and it is still an antibusiness government. They cannot blame it on the NDP any longer. That message is getting out there, and they are going to pay the penalty in the months and years to come. They have no trouble at all with massive intervention into the private sector in the auto insurance field, but

when it comes to a crown corporation with a monopoly, "Well, we've got to be very sensitive about this."

Of course, the reality is that Ontario Hydro is such a powerful behemoth in this province that the government is obviously very reluctant to grapple with that power. Well, I think it has to start to grapple, and we have to deal with situations like breaking up that monopoly.

Let's talk about the question of privatization. Even the member for Frontenac-Addington (Mr. South) has raised this, even though he made a Milquetoast speech in here today, really saying nothing. I know he has some personal views with respect to this which apparently the whip has convinced him not to express here today. We can understand that, but I think this government and this Legislature should be grappling with some of the very difficult issues facing this province with respect to energy generation and energy supply in the next 20 to 30 years.

One of the things we should be looking at is the possibility—just the possibility; let's consider it—of privatization, breaking up Ontario Hydro in respect to its generation capability and transmission capability. Perhaps we should indeed be looking at the question of privatization of the generating arm of Ontario Hydro. Let's get this organization, this crown corporation, down to manageable size. Right now it currently is not at manageable size, and this government and governments of the past have really not had a handle on its operation or any effective control over its operation. I have said quite clearly that past governments have had this problem as well. I think we are facing some very significant questions now.

The member's bill also talks about authorizing the board to regulate the supply and prices to be paid to nonutility producers. This is a major problem. I can talk about a situation in my own riding where a company called Nitrochem, a producer of explosives and chemical fertilizers, has been attempting with Dupont to establish a cogeneration facility with the use of excess steam generated and gas in operations in their Maitland complexes. They have had virtually no co-operation from Ontario Hydro. Ontario Hydro has effectively killed that proposal.

**Mr. Fleet:** I am pleased to have an opportunity to address this resolution. There are a number of problems with the resolution, but one of the things I would like to touch upon is what is not dealt with. The government wants to encourage Hydro to act as a powerful force for the economic good of Ontario. One of the key government



priorities has been to encourage the people of Ontario to use electricity far more efficiently and to conserve electric power.

As a result of the Liberal initiatives, Hydro's attitude towards conservation has thawed. If the members do not believe me, I propose they should look at the refrigerator thermometer program to see just how much we have thawed.

On a larger scale, last year the Minister of Energy instructed Hydro to prepare a plan for energy conservation and efficiency. As a result, Hydro set targets to conserve 35,000 megawatts of electric power by the turn of the century. That is a particularly encouraging step because energy conservation and efficiency is going to play an increasingly important role as we meet our energy needs over the next 15-year period. We all know that conservation plays a key role in providing a safeguard for the environment.

Frankly, quite a bit more needs to be done. One of the problems with the matter that is before us today is that it is far too limited. It does not have the comprehensive scope that we know the government is considering. The member for Frontenac-Addington mentioned quite a number of the steps that are taking place as a broad review, but the important thing is that the government acknowledges that more needs to be done in respect of conserving electric power and that is what we are moving to do.

On another front, for instance, we find there are a greater number of independent electricity generators being supplied more and more to the grid. One step was an increase in the buyback rate, implemented by Hydro.

**Mr. Charlton:** I start out my windup comments by saying to the member for Leeds-Grenville and the member for Durham East that I thank them both for their support of this piece of legislation today. They are both correct that the three of us do not agree on what direction Hydro should take for the future or what methods or facilities Hydro should be using to accommodate that future. What we do agree on is setting up a mechanism to carefully review those questions so that perhaps we have the best possible opportunity to make the right decisions for Ontario's future, whether they be nuclear or conservation and cogeneration.

To the member for Frontenac-Addington and the member for High Park-Swansea (Mr. Fleet), I want to emphasize what I have just said. This bill is about setting up a review mechanism to pull the information process outside of Hydro into the public domain so that we can more

carefully look at the decisions that are made for a very important future.

This bill does not affect the review of the Power Corporation Act that the member for Frontenac-Addington referred to. This legislation in place would not affect the government's ability to set energy policy for Ontario and to direct both Ontario Hydro and the Ontario Energy Board to take account of that energy policy and its decision-making process.

This legislation merely sets up the mechanism to ensure that the public review occurs. There is no mechanism in place now, and I go back to what the member for Durham East said during his comments on this piece of legislation. We are running out of time in Ontario. The major decisions that will affect this province for the next 20 or 25 years around Ontario Hydro have to be made within the next year to 18 months and the government is still in the middle of a massive review and not prepared to proceed.

If the decisions that affect the next 25 years are made before their legislative amendments are put in place, there will have been no serious governmental or public review of those decisions at all. It is far too important to leave any longer. They have to be in place so that as Hydro comes forward with its proposals over the next 12 months, we have a mechanism to take a careful, considered and expert look at those proposals, so that the decisions we make affecting our future are the correct ones.

**Mr. Speaker:** That completes the allotted time for discussion on ballot item 43 and ballot item 44. We will deal first with Mr. McClelland's resolution.

#### NONGOVERNMENTAL VOLUNTARY AGENCIES

**Mr. Speaker:** Mr. McClelland has moved resolution 51.

Motion agreed to.

#### ONTARIO ENERGY BOARD AMENDMENT ACT

The House divided on Mr. Charlton's motion for second reading of Bill 184, which was negatived on the following vote:

#### Ayes

Breaugh, Bryden, Charlton, Cooke, D. S., Cunningham, Cureatz, Farnan, Hampton, Jackson, Johnson, J. M., Laughren, Mackenzie, Marland, McLean, Morin-Strom, Philip, E., Pollock, Rae, B., Reville, Runciman, Wildman.

**Nays**

Ballinger, Beer, Black, Bossy, Brown, Cleary, Collins, Cooke, D. R., Cordiano, Dietsch, Elliot, Epp, Fawcett, Ferraro, Fleet, Furlong, Hart, Henderson, Kanter, Keyes, Kozyra, LeBourdais, Leone, Lipsett, Lupusella, MacDonald, Mahoney, Mancini, Matrundola,

McClelland, McGuigan, Miclash, Miller, Nicholas, Nixon, J. B., Oddie Munro, Patten, Reycraft, Smith, D. W., Sola, South, Stoner, Sullivan, Tatham, Wilson.

Ayes 21; nays 45.

The House recessed at 12:08 p.m.



## AFTERNOON SITTING

The House resumed at 1:30 p.m.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

## CONSTRUCTION SAFETY

**Mr. Mackenzie:** The accident that killed 19-year-old John Ramos at 10 a.m. yesterday morning should not have happened. If there is any truth to newspaper stories beginning to emerge, the Minister of Labour (Mr. Sorbara) has a lot to answer for.

The minister has stalled, for over a year, action on health and safety amendments and mandatory safety committees on construction sites, which were promised in this province. For over a year, in spite of promised action, he and his government have done absolutely nothing in this particular area. People are beginning to realize that there is a lot of talk but no action, and that seems to have become the trademark of this Minister of Labour.

A safety and health committee on the site would probably have corrected the elevator fault. This minister and his government had better start understanding that they are not going to escape some personal responsibility for literal slaughter in the workplace when it is because of, at least to a degree, inaction in areas that they themselves have admitted are overdue.

There should have been action on the safety and health amendments. There should have been action on mandatory safety and health committees on construction sites. It has been promised for more than a year and it is continually delayed. That is one of the reasons that John Ramos is dead today.

## ESTONIA, LATVIA AND LITHUANIA

**Mr. Jackson:** While we in Ontario often take for granted our democratic freedoms, at this very moment in the centre of Europe, nations are struggling to regain the freedom stolen from them by two of modern history's most evil men. Stalin and Hitler lulled the west into accepting the Soviet takeover of the countries of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. This great deception is now known to the world and openly admitted to by the Kremlin with the publication of the Molotov-von Ribbentrop pact, which carved up Europe with the mere stroke of a pen.

Long ignored, the Baltic nations have now captured the attention of the world as the result of actions taken in Estonia, where practically half of

the country's citizens recently joined in a mass, peaceful demonstration to demand their inalienable right for freedom and self-determination.

Edmund Burke once wrote: "All that is required for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing." The west can no longer ignore the plight of the Baltic nations at this critical moment in their history. Canada must now encourage the Soviet Union to resolve one of the most terrible injustices of this century by for ever renouncing her sovereign rights over Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, as it solemnly agreed to in peace treaties with these most deserving nations.

## LIMITATIONS ACT

**Mr. D. R. Cooke:** One year ago this month, I first asked the Attorney General (Mr. Scott) to consider the legitimate concerns of a Kitchener-based incest survivors group, Survivors and Supporters Against Sexual Abuse. As members no doubt will recall, the SSASA decided to call for changes to the Limitations Act after Mr. Justice Maloney determined that a jury award of \$50,000 for pain and suffering and punitive damages could not be collected by the plaintiff because of the four-year limitation period for assault. The plaintiff in this case was sexually abused by her father from age 8 to 16.

The Attorney General has indicated that a comprehensive review of the Limitations Act is taking into account the special concerns of these victims.

I want to share with this House that which I have learned through my involvement with SSASA's cause. As many as one in four girls and one in seven boys are sexually abused as children. Victims of incest are known to experience significant and unique damages resulting from abuse which prevent or contribute to the delay of court action by the victim. Labelled by one expert as a child sexual abuse accommodation syndrome, typical reactions of the victim include repressed memory of sexual abuse, a sense of guilt, helplessness and/or shame and low self-esteem. Of course, physical damages also can occur, including reproductive and digestive system damages.

I want to thank the Attorney General for taking this into account in his review of the Limitations Act.



## ADVOCACY

**Mr. Reville:** Mr. and Mrs. Danielsen were old and confused and sick, and Mrs. Danielsen bled to death in her home in Peel region last year.

This was a situation that should not have been allowed to happen and must not be allowed to happen again. It was not as though authorities did not know that the Danielsens were in need of help; it was that they were powerless to do anything because of the government's delay in dealing with the recommendations of the Fram report.

In fact, the coroner urged the government to immediately set up an office of the public guardian which would provide substitute decision-making to make decisions for mentally incompetent persons and that the government immediately release the Fram report and act on its recommendations.

Mr. and Mrs. Danielsen are not the only elderly, confused and sick people living among us. I knew of five such cases in my own ward, when I was an alderman, of people who were virtually urban hermits, who were sick, who were not well cared for and who in fact had various health problems, some of which led to death, because of the gap in terms of substitute decision-making. This is a gap that must be plugged immediately.

## CONTROL OF SMOKING

**Mr. Sterling:** Tomorrow morning the Student Movement Aimed at Restricting Tobacco, a University of Toronto faculty of law student group, will be holding a press conference here at Queen's Park. The group will be comprised of the president of SMART, who is in the gallery today, and the presidents of the provincial young Liberal, Conservative and New Democratic parties.

Their primary concern is to restrict the sale to and subsequently the use of tobacco by minors. This is a very laudable goal, and it is refreshing to see that our youth can see beyond partisan lines to come together as one to voice their concerns on a very serious health question, unlike us in this Legislature.

How long must we debate the hazards of tobacco before we implement even minor restrictions? Under our present provincial law, tobacco cannot be sold to those under 18 years and those guilty of selling to people under 18 years face a fine of not less than \$2 and not more than \$50. Now, does that sanction strike fear into the retailer's heart?

This government should take its lead from the youth of this province. They see the addictive threat of tobacco and the personal and financial costs involved. It is unfortunate that this government does not have their vision on this issue.

MISSISSAUGA YOUNG MEN'S  
CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION

**Mr. Offer:** I am pleased to rise today in order to recognize the special contribution made by the Young Men's Christian Association volunteers in Mississauga.

Last Friday marked the sixth annual celebration and volunteer appreciation night for the YMCA. We are proud in Mississauga to be in the midst of constructing our first Y for the city.

During the evening, the many services provided by the Y were illustrated. It became clear that the Y is not just a place of gymnasiums and pools, but rather provides a large amount of other services; and these services are largely provided by volunteers who freely give their time for others.

I am pleased to indicate that Daryl Cook and Jack Doney have recently been honoured as volunteers of the year.

Daryl Cook was singled out for her distinguished role in securing the Peel Board of Education fee for service for the Youth Employment Service program. YES is a program run by the Y and supported by the government that allows councillors to give pre-employment training and job placement to unemployed youths between the ages of 16 and 24.

Jack Doney has been active with the Y since 1982 and has served on the YMCA Mississauga regional council for five years. A major accomplishment is his work with the annual community fund drive.

Volunteers play a very important role in every community, and I am particularly proud to recognize and congratulate these individuals from Mississauga.

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## PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

**Mr. McLean:** My statement is directed to the Premier (Mr. Peterson). He is not here today, but a large number of taxpayers in my riding of Simcoe East were dismayed to learn recently that they can no longer find out exactly how much senior provincial officials are paid by his government. The latest edition of the Public Accounts of Ontario, a register of his government's spending and revenue, has undergone a discreet form of censorship.



In the past, the accounts included a list of all government officials paid more than \$50,000 annually and listed exactly how much each made, but those lists have been quietly dropped from the latest revision, covering the 1987-88 fiscal year. Instead, the accounts give salary ranges for deputy ministers and the top four executive levels below deputies. The censorship has not gone unnoticed by many of my constituents, and the backbencher's salary is far less than those of a lot of the deputy ministers and senior civil servants.

## STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY

### MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS ENERGY EFFICIENCY PROGRAM

**Hon. Mr. Wong:** Members may recall that in the most recent speech from the throne the government stated its intention to encourage greater municipal involvement in energy conservation. Today I am introducing a new \$3-million energy efficiency program that will help the province's municipalities to continue their involvement in energy efficiency and reduce their energy costs by millions of dollars every year.

Beginning in January 1989, the municipal buildings energy efficiency program will offer grants to improve the energy efficiency of municipal buildings and encourage energy-efficient operating practices. Through its new programs, the government hopes to help create the market forces that steer society towards environmentally responsible use of energy.

In reducing growth in demand by increasing energy efficiency, economic growth continues with less environmental damage. The government also recognizes that energy efficiency is extremely important in relation to competitiveness. Most other developed countries are far more efficient than we are. In fact, we lag behind our main competitors, including France, Japan, Italy, West Germany, Brazil, the United Kingdom and the United States.

A report on world resources released earlier this week ranked Canada as the most energy-intensive country in the world. That means we use more energy than any other country to produce each unit of our gross national product. We must strive to make more efficient use of our energy resources, but it is not enough for one sector to go it alone. We must all share the responsibility.

Governments at all levels must set the example that all sectors will ultimately have to follow. I know our efforts will pay off. A 20 per cent improvement in energy efficiency across the

board could result in savings of between \$3 billion and \$4 billion on our energy bill every year.

The program I am introducing today has been designed specifically to assist Ontario's smaller communities. It follows the government's successful municipal oil conversion and energy conservation program. Under MOCECP, over 400 municipalities implemented more than 1,400 projects that have helped to save energy and reduce operating costs. Estimated annual savings from that program were \$6.3 million per year.

Under the new program, municipalities with populations under 10,000 will be eligible to receive capital assistance for up to 75 per cent of the cost of retrofitting buildings. Those with populations of between 10,000 and 50,000 can qualify for 50 per cent assistance.

The ministry will also provide technical training, information and advice in co-operation with the association of municipalities of Ontario through our joint energy program. Participating municipalities will be responsible for monitoring reductions in energy usage as a result of projects funded over the program. Program registration forms will be available to municipalities early in the new year.

By decreasing demand and using energy effectively through conservation and efficiency improvements, we can improve our security of supply and lessen the burden on the environment.

Every effort to safeguard our environment must rank high on our list of public priorities. The municipal sector realizes that energy efficiency makes good business sense. Our goal over the next three years is to help them make it a part of their normal business plans. The municipal buildings energy efficiency program contributes to all of these objectives and at the same time meets the needs of municipalities by reducing their energy costs.

## MINING SAFETY

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** As members know, late last year and during the first part of this year, the standing committee on resources development conducted an extensive inquiry into mining safety. The result of their efforts was the tabling in July of a comprehensive report for the consideration of this Legislature. Today I am pleased to table the response of the Ministry of Labour to this document, a response which describes the specific actions being taken by my ministry to implement the report's recommendations.



Mining safety is a difficult and complex subject. Underground mines and mining plants present special risks to the men and women who work in them. The task of providing leadership through legislation requires a specialized understanding of both the issues relating to occupational safety and the specialized conditions existing in Ontario's mines. This is the responsibility of the Ministry of Labour's mining health and safety branch.

But while the principal legislative responsibility for health and safety of miners rests with the Ministry of Labour, the practice of developing safety regulations and acceptable standards for mines and mining plants is a co-operative and tripartite effort. The Mining Legislative Review Committee, the body responsible for this task, brings together mining trade union representatives, both the Ontario Mining Association and the Aggregate Producers' Association of Ontario and, of course, officials from the Ministry of Labour. It was before this body that my ministry placed the committee's report, asking that regulations be formulated where it was considered appropriate to do so.

In addition to the consultation process, a number of specific actions are being undertaken by the Ministry of Labour to respond to the committee's recommendations. Where the committee report suggested that reports concerning the internal responsibility system or IRS be shared more widely, the ministry is both developing an IRS evaluation system designed to include input from industry and labour, and is co-ordinating development of a training/communications package within the mining industry.

Where the committee suggested that the mining health and safety branch inspectorate enjoy greater input into the deliberations of the Mining Legislative Review Committee, the mining health and safety branch is restructuring its internal regulation review committee to provide broader input from field staff and a more expedited passing of proposed amendments.

Where the committee suggested the adoption of a more streamlined procedure for the bringing of charges against transgressors of the act, the ministry has developed a computerized tracking system designed to overcome delays associated with prosecution decisions.

Furthermore, my ministry shares the committee's view that those resources available to the mining health and safety branch continue to be sufficient to permit it to perform effectively. This

is, of course, an ongoing responsibility of the Ministry of Labour.

These recommendations are the exclusive responsibility of this ministry and are being acted upon now. Other recommendations are part of an extensive review and modernization of the legislative framework for the regulation of occupational health and safety in Ontario, including those relating to higher fines and the role of worker safety representatives. Still others will require co-operation between the Ministry of Labour and other jurisdictions, a co-operation we are committed to developing.

A detailed account of this government's response to the mining safety recommendations of the standing committee on resources development will be found within the document I intend to table later this afternoon. I would ask that all those who are truly concerned about health and safety in Ontario's mines and for Ontario's miners take the time to read it, as it strongly confirms the commitment of this government to assure a safe work environment for all miners.

Finally, I would like to congratulate the members of the standing committee on resources development for the fine work that they did in preparing their recommendations.

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## RESPONSES

### MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS ENERGY EFFICIENCY PROGRAM

**Mr. Charlton:** I would like to take a few moments to respond to the statement by the Minister of Energy (Mr. Wong). Despite the comments he has made in his statement, the facts he has set out in terms of the potential for conservation in Ontario and the way he set out that we can both improve our security of energy supply in Ontario and reduce stress on the environment, I have to say that his announcement here today is a bit of a joke. He is correct that it is a program that works and it is a small step in the right direction. To put it in terms our children would put it, it is a pin step.

The select committee on energy two years ago set out four major recommendations on conservation initiatives in this province. None of those initiatives have been proceeded with, including three which called for fairly major demonstration projects in the residential, commercial and industrial sectors in this province.

The select committee just went through another set of hearings and what we learned during those hearings is that we have made absolutely no progress in terms of identifying the



potentials and the costs of conservation in the three sectors that the select committee recommended we proceed in two years ago.

The minister has taken, as I said, a pin step in the right direction, but he set out for us what the reality that faces us is. I think his statement in itself clearly reflects the inadequacy of what it is he has announced today as a programmatic response. I refer specifically to his statement: "A report on world resources released earlier this week ranked Canada as the most energy-intensive country in the world. That means we use more energy than any other country to produce each unit of our gross national product."

We have a horrendous situation facing us and a programmatic response that is so minute in the overall energy situation and the problem that no one will be able to identify the results.

### MINING SAFETY

**Mr. Laughren:** I would like to respond briefly to the response by the Minister of Labour (Mr. Sorbara) to the report of the standing committee on resources development on mining health and safety.

The minister will know that the committee worked extremely hard to come up with a report that was unanimous in its recommendations. There were approximately 50 recommendations in that report. We await with great interest the tabling of the more comprehensive response by the minister. I hope that the minister, when he went through that report with his officials, took into consideration the fact that it was indeed a unanimous report.

There are a couple of ominous signs in the minister's statement today, even though the minister shakes his head. Perhaps even shaking his head is an ominous sign.

The minister is simply looking at the question of higher fines and the role of worker safety representatives. The committee agreed that the internal responsibility system was a better system than going out and hiring an army of inspectors to inspect all the mining workplaces in Ontario. But we also felt very strongly that there should be full-time worker safety representatives on the job sites.

If the minister is still looking at that aspect and still looking at the question of higher penalties for infractions, then it does not bode well. Now, I do not want to prejudge what the minister has said in his more complicated—

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** Then why are you?

**Mr. Laughren:** Well, because of the statement that the minister made just a few minutes ago that he is still looking at that.

I hope that when the more comprehensive response has been tabled, it will include a firm commitment to proceed with the whole matter of compulsory worker safety representatives on the various job sites and, as well, that the whole question of infractions will be looked at in a very serious way.

Finally, I hope very much that the minister took into consideration the committee's comments on the Mines Accident Prevention Association of Ontario. I know there have been some structural changes in that organization, but they have not gone nearly far enough. I hope the minister understands what the committee was saying in regard to that particular organization.

**Mr. Sterling:** I would like to join in responding to the statement of the Minister of Labour today with regard to the response to the standing committee on resources development.

I too would like to add congratulations to the resources development committee, which did come up with a unanimous report. It is noted we have not had an opportunity in this Legislature to debate that report, notwithstanding that we now have a response to it.

I would not prejudge the response that the Minister of Labour is tabling this afternoon but would only make the remark that our party stands very strong on enhancing miner safety in the future. We have noted in the past that this government is one of studies and reports. We will insist that action is taken on the report of the standing committee on resources development and we will insist that if the response is not adequate to meet the demands of that particular committee, we will demand it in this Legislature day after day.

### MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS ENERGY EFFICIENCY PROGRAM

**Mr. Cureatz:** As critic to the Minister of Energy (Mr. Wong), I would like to congratulate him on his statement involving efficiency. On his first page he says, "I am introducing a new \$3-million energy efficiency program that will help the province's municipalities..." and, of course, I support him on that.

Indeed, as a member for 12 years in these chambers, all of which time, I say to the House, I have sat on the various select committees on energy and Ontario Hydro, I have had the opportunity of a working experience, as my New Democrat Party colleague has, in terms of the appreciation of some of the problems at Ontario Hydro.



I want to tell the minister, and I am going to be reminding him about this over the next three years before the election, that he is going to have a very difficult choice to make. As I said this morning in private members' hour, Ontario is producing electricity in the following three basic manners: from fossil fuels, coal and oil, from nuclear power and from hydro.

We found out from the committee again this summer and fall that indeed the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley) has concerns about fossil fuels. Up the stack goes the smoke and we have acid rain concerns. Then we are told of the possibility of the greenhouse effect. We suffered this summer through a very intense two or three weeks of heat. That could cause a depletion of water in the Great Lakes and hence the depletion of the production of electricity by hydro power. That leaves the production of electricity by nuclear power.

The minister has started a report to investigate the costs of nuclear power, but no matter what the report comes back with, the minister is going to have to make the decision on what method he is going to be using for the production of electricity.

I say to the minister that we in Ontario can tolerate the lack of electricity in summer. Indeed, we were told that we could not meet the 20,000 megawatts that were demanded and the people across the province cut back. But we cannot tolerate a lack of electricity in winter in Ontario. The minister can play around for maybe a year talking about conservation, but these conservation methods are not going to be great enough to meet the future demands. They are talking somewhere between 23,000 megawatts and 30,000 megawatts by the turn of the century.

It is about time the minister started taking a look at banking of environmental approvals. If we need a Darlington B, he should first decide if we need the environmental approval and then get on with it. As the minister probably well knows after being here for a year, it takes some five, 10 or 15 years for the development of any kind of electrical plant, be it thermal or indeed be it nuclear. Darlington, in my riding, has taken 12 years and we do not have the first two units on stream yet, because we want to make sure that these plants are safe. By the same token, we want to make sure that Ontario will have enough electricity.

The minister has not yet come up with any kind of strategy on assuring the people of Ontario that we will have enough electricity. I give him one year to play around and have his investigations

in-house with the Ministry of Energy and through Ontario Hydro, but after that, he had better come across and start telling us.

**1400**

The official opposition is against nuclear power. Let's see how much influence they are going to have on him, because he is going to have to make a very tough decision on it. We are not going to tolerate in this province being short of electricity. We are going to be having protests in the middle of winter demanding that he answer why, when we turn on the electric furnace and the electricity needed for our homes in the middle of winter, he has not made—

**Mr. Speaker:** The member's time has expired.

#### ATTENDANCE OF PREMIER

**Mr. B. Rae:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order: I understand that the Premier (Mr. Peterson) has scheduled a press conference for precisely the hour at which this House normally has question period, when the leader of the third party and the Leader of the Opposition normally address questions to the Premier and other senior ministers.

In that case, I think it is a most flagrant abuse of the traditions of this House to schedule a press conference at precisely that same time. I would also say that we have other questions for other ministers who are absent today. We have 10 or 11 ministers who are away. I suggest that we simply recess until the Premier has the courtesy to appear before the House.

**Mr. Speaker:** The government House leader.

**Hon. Mr. Conway:** The Premier of Ontario is meeting today with the Premier of Quebec. It was indicated to the opposition offices that the Premier would not be at question period today. I think it is fair to say that on the basis of his record, this Premier has been very good in his attendance at question period.

I want to repeat that the Premier has been here on a goodly number of days. He has certainly been here on the earlier days of this week. It was clearly indicated that because of the visit of the Premier of Quebec, the Premier of Ontario would not be here today. The indication was passed along earlier this afternoon. A goodly number of ministers are here.

I simply want to say that we are here to answer the questions put by the members of the House and I think we should get on with that business.

**Mr. Brandt:** On the same point of order, Mr. Speaker: The Premier's office is located no more



than 20 or 30 feet from this chamber. As members of this Legislature, we require a total of some four hours a week from the Premier to be here, prepared to answer the questions of the opposition. Today, as we look across at the empty chairs opposite, there are probably a dozen cabinet ministers who are not here, in addition to the Premier. I think the suggestion of the Leader of the Opposition with respect to a recess until the Premier can find the time to come into this forum to respond to the legitimate questions of the members of the opposition is quite in order.

**Mr. Speaker:** I have listened very carefully to points made by the previous speakers representing each party. I appreciate the suggestion that was made by the leader of the official opposition. However, I must remind all members that the members of the House are the individuals who set out the standing orders. The standing orders only allow the Speaker to recess or adjourn the House because of grave disorder.

**Mr. Laughren:** It can be arranged.

**Mr. Speaker:** I do not see any grave disorder; therefore, I will recognize the Leader of the Opposition for the first question.

**Mr. B. Rae:** In light of what has happened, we are not going to be attending question period this afternoon.

The members of the opposition left the chamber.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. Oral questions. The member for Wentworth East.

**Ms. Collins:** My question is for the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Mr. Kerrio:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: In the event that this transpires as it has unfolded before us, is there any way that it would be on the record that these people decided not to participate in the parliamentary procedure of this province? It seems to me that they have adequate time to do that. Is there any question about that situation?

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. I really do not think it is up to the Speaker to answer such a question. The Speaker does not answer questions. This is oral question period. I will recognize the member.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### SUICIDE PREVENTION

**Ms. Collins:** My question is for the Minister of Health. As the minister is aware, the national task force on suicide in Canada presented its report in 1987. Among its many recommenda-

tions, the report called for the establishment of a public education campaign to reduce the stigma attached to seeking treatment for states of depression. It also recommended the appointment of a senior provincial official responsible for suicide prevention, similar to Alberta's suicidologist. Could the minister inform this House of the steps her ministry has taken in this regard?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** I would like to acknowledge the member for Wentworth East and her interest in this very important subject. She has talked to me about this on several occasions and I know of her activity at the community level as well.

I believe she recognizes, as I hope that all members of this House would, the importance of education and community awareness in relation to suicide prevention and mental health issues generally. We have come a long way in this province in being able to talk about mental illness and in trying—and I think we have tried quite successfully—to remove the stigma of mental illness within our communities.

We have also come a long way in providing treatment at the community level and in welcoming ex-psychiatric patients into our communities from which they came. The ministry supports public education efforts and particularly the efforts of the Canadian Mental Health Association, which does a very fine job in raising public awareness on issues of mental illness generally and issues of suicide prevention specifically.

**Ms. Collins:** Many of the report's recommendations focus on native people, students and prison inmates. These groups are easily reached. Mechanisms for suicide prevention can be relatively easy to implement. Will the minister share the report's findings with her colleagues the minister responsible for native affairs (Mr. Scott), the Minister of Education (Mr. Ward) and the Minister of Correctional Services (Mr. Ramsay) and encourage them to implement the findings of this task force?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** Suicide prevention is a very important component of our community-based mental health strategy and our community-based mental health programs. As well, efforts over the past three years have focused on programs both for youth and for residents of the north, which include native groups.

I know the member is aware of the efforts of our colleague the member for Muskoka-Georgian Bay (Mr. Black), which have focused particularly on youth, and his report on drug abuse, illegal and illicit drug use in the province.



I can tell her that I visited in northern Ontario a program funded by the ministry, directed and run by the native community.

I want her to know that mental health and community mental health programming, the issue that she raised, is an example of the need for the Ministry of Health to go beyond the responsibility simply of treatment and to co-ordinate and work with other ministries in the view that health is far more than simply the treatment of illness.

**Mr. Speaker:** There are quite a number of private conversations. It is difficult to hear.

1410

### MULTICULTURAL POLICING

**Ms. Hart:** My question is to the Solicitor General and it has to do with multicultural policing. I understand that there had been some new directions taken in her ministry with respect to this very sensitive area of multicultural policing, where we have had a lot of difficulties in the past. Could the minister please tell me the status of that and, since I am very concerned about it from special parts of my community, where is she going from here?

**Hon. Mrs. Smith:** I wish to thank the member for her question, because the whole subject of multicultural policing was given as my first priority of business when I became minister and indeed we have treated it as such all year. I was fortunate enough to have a very excellent parliamentary assistant, the member for St. Andrew-St. Patrick (Mr. Kanter), and I assigned him this task of working with this multicultural policing as his chief responsibility.

Among the things we have done this year, we had an excellent symposium of police officers from across the province and multicultural groups from right around the province. This was planned with excellent speakers and followed up by groups meeting in small groups to discuss the issues at hand. It was held a month ago in Aylmer with great success.

As well as that, we have four individual, more localized, regional meetings on multiculturalism, one of which is in Thunder Bay this weekend. I am about to leave tomorrow to attend it, as is my parliamentary assistant.

The message is getting out loud and clear that the police forces must represent the people whom they are policing. They are part of that society and act on its behalf, and we want to see not only fair treatment to multicultural groups but also we want to see those groups represented in the force.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you. It seems like a fairly lengthy response.

**Ms. Hart:** I understand that the new commissioner of the Ontario Provincial Police is also working along these lines as well. Can the minister give us some idea of what is happening in the OPP in this direction of multicultural policing?

**Hon. Mrs. Smith:** Once again answering on the two different levels, as far as the makeup of the police force is concerned, the OPP is examining its entrance requirements and making sure that in no subtle way are its requirements working against the entrance of ethnic groups into the police force. An example of this would be that they have removed height requirements, which had worked against multicultural policing.

As well as that, there are instruction courses at Aylmer and also delivered in retraining processes in Brampton and throughout the province in the police stations on the handling of problems around multicultural policing: how one avoids both the reality and the appearance of being unfair to people of other races. A very active program is under way on both levels.

### TRADE WITH UNITED STATES

**Mr. Cordiano:** I have a question of the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology. It is with respect to the newspaper article with regard to Gilette Canada and the closing down of its manufacturing operations here in Canada, obviously a direct result of the whole question of free trade and the question of the lowering of tariffs.

The article that I am referring to notes that there is a reduction in the tariff on razors, on blades and on fountain and felt pens by the year 1998. That obviously is going to have an impact on other manufacturing plants in the country. Can the minister indicate how this might affect other plants with respect to tariff reduction in other sectors?

**Hon. Mr. Kwinter:** I thank the member for his question. I am sure all members will have read the story and will share the same concern that we have, and that is the possibility of a deindustrialization of our manufacturing capacity. As many, many multinational companies are rationalizing, we will see more and more of that.

As a matter of fact, during the free trade hearings we heard from a chief executive officer of one of the largest food processing companies in the world saying that in his opinion, once the free trade agreement goes through, any food product that has a shelf life of three weeks or longer will no longer be made in Canada. They



will be made in other jurisdictions and all we will have is a distribution system here.

**Mr. Cordiano:** There are at least 60 people in Toronto who will be out of work with respect to these individuals. Will the minister intervene on their behalf to make sure that the federal government, which is now going to be responsible for the impact of all of these plant shutdowns, takes up its responsibility for the loss of these 60 jobs in Toronto?

**Hon. Mr. Kwinter:** The whole area of worker adjustment is one that we are very concerned about. It is the major issue that we are going to have to address as a result of this free trade agreement. I think members will know—it is the indication to me anyway—that the first ministers, in their meeting in February, will be dealing with this issue. It is an area in which we will be making representations to the federal government to make sure that it honours its responsibility.

As a result of this agreement, there are going to be massive adjustments required. It is the federal government's responsibility. It is their responsibility to provide the financial wherewithal and the training programs to look after this adjustment problem.

### MULTICULTURALISM

**Mr. McClelland:** I have a question today for the Minister of Citizenship. The community that I represent, Brampton, and more particularly the riding of Brampton North, has undergone significant change in the past number of years.

Clearly, over the past decade the face, both figuratively and literally, of our riding has changed. We have had a massive influx of people from all around the world. In fact, today in our riding there are some 40-plus organizations that represent different ethnocultural backgrounds and I understand over 100 languages are spoken in our community. This is obviously bringing many pressures to bear in the community, and the member for York East (Ms. Hart) just addressed a specific question to the Solicitor General (Mrs. Smith).

More specifically to the Minister of Citizenship, I wonder if he would be kind enough to share with me today some of the programs that he has initiated to help us deal with the problems we are facing in communities such as Brampton North with regard to the real change in the diversity and multicultural makeup of our community.

**Hon. Mr. Phillips:** I appreciate the question. Just to reinforce the magnitude of the situation, I

think the members are probably aware, but I will make them aware if they are not, that this province each year attracts about 80,000 immigrants, and probably about two thirds of those now come from Asia, Central and South America and the Caribbean. We are fortunate enough to be able to attract that number, but it does make a situation where we have to ensure that we have a climate where they are truly welcome and are made to feel totally at home.

The programs we are offering are in the Ministry of Education—a very comprehensive program on race and ethnocultural policies in our school system, and Dr. Mavis Burke is responsible for implementing that. We have a comprehensive policy within the government on race relations and we have a regular group that meets to ensure that each ministry is adhering to that policy. Our Minister of Housing (Ms. Hošek) has a race relations group within the Metro Toronto Housing Authority to ensure that in those programs we are meeting the needs.

I announced here about three weeks ago a new grant program to community groups to help ensure that they are creating a climate for positive race relations, as well as the employment equity program that our minister responsible for the Human Resources Secretariat is responsible for implementing.

The point I am making is that we must advance on all of those fronts.

**Mr. McClelland:** To the minister again, he has mentioned a number of programs, and the Solicitor General, in response to the member for York East, mentioned programs particularly dealing with police forces. One area of government that impacts people in a very practical way on a day-to-day basis, perhaps more so than any other level of government, is the municipal level of government. What programs or initiatives is the Ministry of Citizenship taking with respect to helping our colleagues at the municipal level to deal with the problems we are beginning to encounter in our cities and towns across this province?

**Hon. Mr. Phillips:** The member is right in that some of our most successful programs are the ones that are initiated and implemented by municipal race relations committees. We are fortunate in this province that our municipalities have been very proactive in this area.

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One thing our ministry is doing to further encourage the exchange of good ideas is to host a two-day conference involving municipal race relations groups across this province on Decem-



ber 2 and 3. I think over 50 different municipalities will be participating in this conference, which is designed to ensure that we are taking advantage of race relations activities that work in one municipality, that they are communicated to another municipality, and helping to encourage municipalities to expand their activities in this race relations area. This is an important conference that I think will accomplish for this province a good deal in advancing the cause of positive race relations.

### COURT FACILITIES

**Mr. Bossy:** I would like to ask a question of the Attorney General. As there have been in the past several inspections made of our county courthouse, again we have had a panel that has toured the courthouse and has found the courthouse very wanting of repair. I am just wondering if the minister could tell me if the ministry is going to take action, because the people in Chatham have been asking for that for a considerable amount of time. I would like to know if there is going to be anything done towards rectifying the problems that exist at the courthouse.

**Hon. Mr. Scott:** I am very grateful for the question. As the honourable member from the county indicates, the public inspection panel, which meets once a year under the direction of the local judge, conducted an inspection of the county courthouse. They found that there were some repairs necessary. They found that a handrail on a stairway was loose, that a section of the building near the entrance had begun to subside as a result of some soil disturbance and a number of other matters. I am happy to tell the honourable member that my ministry, together with the Ministry of Government Services, has retained a consultant to deal with the subsidence question and the other matters will, in due course, be repaired locally.

**Mr. Bossy:** One of the critical areas is the fact that there is no access to the courthouse for the handicapped. I think that in itself would create the urgency that some action is taken. I hope the ministry—as the minister has indicated, and I appreciate his response—will be looking into this. The handicapped have called my office directly and made me aware of this, and I hope the Attorney General acts on that.

**Hon. Mr. Scott:** It is an important question because, as the honourable member knows, since this government came to office we have made it plain that access for the handicapped to government and private buildings is an important issue

for us. I believe I am correct in saying that no buildings for which I am responsible have been commenced or completed since the 1985 election in which access for the handicapped is not available.

As the honourable member will also know, however, we have a large number of older courthouses, jails, legal aid clinics and commercial establishments which lack access for the handicapped. In so far as we can replace those facilities with facilities that are properly accessed, we are attempting to do so within the budgetary constraint by which we are all bound. We have made very considerable headway in the courthouses of Ontario, and I am grateful that the honourable member has brought the particular problem to my attention today.

### RETAIL SALES TAX

**Mr. Keyes:** First of all, I think it is a great shame today that we have no representation from the two other parties of the House, particularly when we have 20 members of government here and 20 members of the very key—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. Your question is to which minister?

**Mr. Keyes:** It is to the Minister of Revenue. Quite often we find, and I expect many members in this House have found the same thing, that people receive deliveries of furniture from a store and sometimes two things happen. First of all, if the furniture is delivered by the store owner through his own vehicles, seven per cent—now eight per cent—sales tax is added to the cost of delivery, which is then added to the total bill.

However, should the store choose, for one reason or another, to have the furniture delivered by a carter or jobber, there is no sales tax charged on that delivery. Citizens are saying, “Why must I pay sales tax on delivery charges when delivered by the store vehicle, whereas if it is done by a carter no charge exists?” Would the minister please give me the rationale behind that policy, which may be a holdover from the previous administration?

**Hon. Mr. Grandmaître:** This tax has been in place, really, since 1961, and I will be introducing Bill 122 for second reading today, which will clarify the section of the retail sales tax and give a full explanation of the delivery charges.

The member is absolutely correct in saying that if you do use a common carrier there are no taxes added to the cost of delivery, whereas the owner of a truck or a vehicle used for delivery of these goods is taxable. What the Treasurer (Mr. R. F. Nixon) or the Treasury decided some eight



or nine months ago is that the act was not too well defined, especially that section in that act. I want to remind the honourable member that this tax has been in place since 1961 and will continue to be applied as it was in 1961 or as it was supposed to be applied in 1961.

**Mr. Keyes:** I appreciate the comments from the minister and will look forward to the introduction of Bill 122. I hope it does clarify it, because I know I have had a very difficult time trying to explain in a satisfactory manner the answer to the constituents on both sides of it: the store owner who is tempted to bring in on contract a carter or common carrier in order that he can save the charge against the constituent; and I have an equally difficult time telling my next-door neighbour why one delivery time he has to pay sales tax and not the next.

May I ask the minister if he will continue to re-evaluate this policy, to be sure that it is fair and equitable? I know that we have a reason, and a fairly valid one, for charging sales tax on federal tax on telephone bills, which I accept, but this to me is an entirely different matter. Will the minister agree to review this thoroughly with his ministry officials?

**Hon. Mr. Grandmaitre:** The definition of fair value in Bill 122 includes delivery charges, but I want to assure the member that the Treasury and my ministry are continually looking at improving or making the Retail Sales Tax Act more comprehensive, more understandable, and we will make sure that that section of the act is reviewed annually, as it is.

#### WETLANDS MANAGEMENT

**Mr. Offer:** I have a question to ask the Minister of Natural Resources. My question is with respect to his ministry's position on the preservation of wetlands in this province. There is located in my riding a wetland complex of some importance and this area is referred to as the Creditview bog. It has been the subject of extensive meetings between myself and interested constituents—who have a very firm commitment and determination to make certain that wetlands of some ecological importance are preserved in the city of great growth—as well as meetings with the council of the city of Mississauga.

Many people see in this area a home for a variety of plant and animal life, and my question to the minister is: What is his ministry's position on the acquisition of such lands?

**Hon. Mr. Kerrio:** Of course I am very anxious to identify with this very important

question, not only as it relates to the question that is asked by the honourable member, but, indeed, across all of Ontario. Many Ontarians feel that the wetlands and bogs are something less than desirable, but I, as the minister, must deliver a message so that they might understand that the wetlands and the bogs of the province are nature's way of having a good habitat for wildlife and, indeed, to control the flow of water that falls from the skies in a way that we do not get flooding and adverse impact on our community.

**1430**

This particular wetland that the honourable member asks about is not one that is of the highest order. What we have done in the province is to protect the wetlands in categories of type 1, 2 or 3, which are the most desirable to protect.

I am disappointed, in fact, that this one is in about a category 7, but I think the thing that I would do and encourage the member to do is to get the mayor from that riding to decide, if there are funds available there, that in the interim she could put up money to protect the type of wetland that my friend is interested in.

So it is a very important initiative that the government is taking. I am very pleased that the member has asked the question. It feels just a little bit like being in New Brunswick today. I think it is a very comfortable feeling.

**Mr. Offer:** By way of supplementary, I would like to get clarification as to what priority your ministry places on the protection of wetlands in this province.

Interjections.

**Hon. Mr. Kerrio:** Oh, I thought they were waiting for the quiet over there, Mr. Speaker. I am surprised.

**Mr. Speaker:** No, if you wish to respond.

**Hon. Mr. Kerrio:** Of course, I have placed a very high priority on protecting wetlands. In fact, one of the first initiatives that I took as a minister was to increase or improve opportunities to have a very valuable inventory across the province.

I was given as an undertaking by the former government a time frame of some four to five years to complete this inventory. I am pleased to say that with a little bit of initiative on the part of the new government, the people responded in a very positive way and we got the inventory done in less than half the time that had been allocated.

The first thing we have to do is to identify the areas in classes 1, 2 and 3 that have to be protected. As I said before, it is important that we move that forward by at least two years, but more like two and a half years, to get on with the



inventory. I am pleased that has been done and that we are, in fact, now very able to identify the areas that are to be protected.

#### NORTHERN HEALTH SERVICES

**Mr. Campbell:** I have looked at some of the problems in northern Ontario health care, and I am very much concerned, of course, that there are a couple of problems that exist.

I would like to ask the Minister of Health if she could comment on the issue of attracting and keeping young health professionals in northern Ontario to keep the standard of health care at a very high level. I wonder if the minister could comment on the steps she has taken.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** As the member for Sudbury knows, I was recently in Sudbury and made some announcements that I think will have an important effect on being able to respond to the very special needs of northern Ontario.

I know from my experience as I travelled through the north this summer and heard at first hand from the people in northern communities that, in fact, there are difficulties in attracting physicians particularly, but other health professionals as well, to some of the more remote and rural communities of this province, but particularly the remote northern communities.

I have established a northern health manpower committee, which will set as its priorities the opportunity to look at the needs of the north and to set its priorities for us, so that the underserved area program, which I know the member is very familiar with, as well as our northern medical specialist incentive program and our northern initiatives, will be responded to in a fashion that includes those people who have the opportunity to give us advice. Included on this committee will be not only the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Northern Development but providers-of-care representatives from the medical profession, the nursing profession, planners and district health council representation. I am hoping this committee will help us to address the very significant issues facing the challenges of northern health services.

**Mr. Campbell:** I am concerned not only with the physicians but with other allied health programs such as physiotherapy, pharmacy and French-language services in other disciplines. You mentioned some, but I am wondering if the committee could look at some of the other allied health professionals and also at some of the steps that could be taken in the event that we can come to grips with some of the programs that we need in northern Ontario.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** I think we have made some progress, but we recognize that the needs of the north are far greater than just physician manpower. In fact, we have had bursaries for speech pathology, which were announced in August 1987, as well as a new program of grants initiated in 1987 for rehabilitation specialists, including physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech pathology, audiology and chiropody.

We know that what is especially important in the north is that many of those communities need services in the French language. I know the member heard when I was in Sudbury—and I think this is extremely important—that we have arranged for 100 seats in medicine, dentistry, allied health sciences, pharmacy and nursing, in co-operation with the universities in Quebec, so that we will be able to train the professionals to meet the needs of the north in the French language. I am hoping the appointment of a bilingual northern health care co-ordinator within the ministry will help us make sure that our efforts are appropriate and co-ordinated.

#### INTERVAL AND TRANSITION HOUSES

**Ms. Poole:** My question is for the Minister of Community and Social Services. As the minister is aware, the interval and transition houses in Ontario provide a very valuable service in serving battered women and their children in this province. In addition to providing emergency accommodation, transition houses also provide counselling and support for women and children who are staying in the shelter.

I understand the ministry has developed a new funding formula to assist transition houses in order to stabilize their funding. However, I understand that the Ontario Association of Interval and Transition Houses has responded negatively to this proposal. Could the minister please outline for members what the current state of the minister's negotiations with the OAITH is at this stage?

**Hon. Mr. Sweeney:** In the past three years, the total number of dollars allocated by this ministry alone for family violence programs has gone from approximately \$6 million to \$26 million. With respect to transition houses alone and the shelters, our funding has gone from about \$5 million to almost \$19 million, so there has been a considerable recognition of the needs of transition houses and the service they provide.

A couple of years ago, the representatives of the transition houses came to see us and indicated that we should be allocating most of our resources to stabilizing the funding of the



existing transition houses rather than to be putting new ones into place. We therefore sat down with them and over the past two years have worked out a change in the funding formula.

As the honourable member has indicated, there is some dissatisfaction with that, but let me briefly explain what it consists of. First of all, the transition houses will continue to get the basic per diem from the municipalities through our hostel program. Above and beyond that, their approved expenses will be covered by our ministry to the tune of 80 to 100 per cent, depending upon what other fund-raising resources they have.

Our initial job was to protect what was already in place. What the transition houses are now asking for is that we put more staff in place and that we increase the salaries of those staffs.

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**Ms. Poole:** I would certainly like to commend the Minister of Community and Social Services for his work on behalf of transition and interval houses.

**Mr. Speaker:** Supplementary.

**Ms. Poole:** I do have one concern, though. I understand that the new funding proposal was to go into effect on April 1 of this year. Have arrangements been made for interim funding in the meantime?

**Hon. Mr. Sweeney:** As of April 1, we have clearly indicated to each of the 78 transition houses across the province that we are prepared to sign an agreement with them on the basis of the new funding formula. The last figure I saw was that about three quarters of them, in fact, have signed; there are about 25 per cent who have not. We have indicated that we will certainly not see even those who have not signed in any kind of undue financial difficulty.

One of the steps that we have taken further, however, is to recognize that the organization itself, OAITH, wanted to do some further consultation with its members. I believe we provided something like about \$10,000 to enable them to do that. Since then, we have provided additional funds to enable them to come forward with an alternative proposal themselves. We just received that alternative proposal about 10 days ago. Our ministry staff are now reviewing it at the present time and have indicated that they will make a response to OAITH within roughly the next two weeks.

#### SCHOOL FUNDING

**Mr. Kozyra:** I have a question for the Minister of Education. The minister is no doubt

aware of the large amount of controversy that has existed in Thunder Bay over the possible closure and transfer of one of the high schools, namely Lakeview High School. The major bone of contention there has been, as stated both by board officials and by administration, that if that particular school is not transferred, there is a danger of forfeiting the substantial amount of money that has been allocated by the ministry.

Can the minister clarify once and for all on the official record of the House whether this is so, whether there is a danger in that money being forfeited?

**Hon. Mr. Ward:** As the member points out, there has indeed been a considerable amount of controversy over a proposed closure of the school, which was part of a settlement under the provisions of Bill 30, a settlement that was negotiated by all parties in good faith. I think, though, it is important to note that the capital allocation referred to was one that was made as a result of that particular board's capital expenditure forecasts submission.

Each year, boards throughout this province provide my ministry with a list of projects rated by priority. Determinations are made as to the appropriateness of those submissions and requests, and a judgement is made on the basis of the merits of the particular project itself. Now, I understand that part of the controversy up in the Lakehead also revolves around whether or not that capital expenditure itself, for elementary purposes, is appropriate, and the new board, when it comes into office, I am sure will be able to make that determination as well.

**Mr. Kozyra:** As the minister may also be aware, because of that controversy a considerable number of members of the board were not re-elected, and we have a majority of those who would seem to be opposing this particular school closure and transfer. As a result, they have called for an independent study over and above the one that was done. Are the minister and the ministry in favour of or opposed to an independent study being conducted?

**Hon. Mr. Ward:** It would seem to me that the board is appropriately fulfilling its responsibility. That is a matter of choice for that particular board if it wishes to review positions previously taken as they relate to the closure of the high school.

In terms of the capital allocation and the elementary allocation made under the capital expenditure forecast, I want to reiterate that the funds that are committed are committed for a specific project as identified by that board.



Should they have a change of mind or a change of heart in that particular matter, they can convey that through to my ministry during the current capital expenditure submissions.

#### GOVERNMENT LAND

**Mrs. LeBourdais:** I have a question for the Minister of Government Services. It has been reported in the Etobicoke-Lakeshore papers that there will be a public hearing to be held this coming Saturday, November 26, concerning the future development of the Lakeshore Psychiatric Hospital grounds. I am wondering if the minister can give me, and also the residents of that particular area, some assurance with regard to the green space which surrounds the property.

**Hon. Mr. Patten:** The question is a timely one, because on Saturday, indeed, there will be an open-house opportunity for residents of Lakeshore-Etobicoke to take a look at some proposals that are being put forward by Baird-Sampson Associates in terms of some options for the future development of that site. I would like to point out to the member that the original site was 63 acres large, and the provincial government has turned over to the conservation authority about 32 acres of this land for park land. In fact, the conservation authority is planning to develop this right down to the lakeside and add to that parcel of land.

According to the original study of the associates who have helped prepare our report and our alternatives this Saturday, housing is being considered: additional park land, office space and some housing on this particular piece of property.

**Mrs. LeBourdais:** Can the minister give us some indication as to the type of housing that will be going into this area and what will happen to the present old architecture of the buildings that exist there now?

**Hon. Mr. Patten:** Yes. The proposals, of course, are just that. We will listen very carefully to the feedback from the residents and from the various groups that have been invited to make comment. We will then review those comments and, like all land owners, we will be putting forward our best proposal to the city council, and other meetings with the public will ensue.

I suppose the important point to know is that we are talking about preserving the heritage of the beautiful buildings that are on this property. We are talking about preserving the health unit that exists there now and that people would like to see retained. We are talking about a mixed concept of housing that would include those who

earn below \$26,000 a year. About a quarter of the housing units would be for that. There would be about a quarter of the housing units that would be suitable for those within the \$26,000-to-\$40,000 salary range.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you. I am sure there might be someone else with a question.

#### AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

**Mr. Fleet:** My question is for the Minister of Financial Institutions. The minister will know that I have an interest, and my constituents have a strong interest, in ensuring that there are fair car insurance rates in Ontario.

The government, in the last election, undertook to protect consumers across Ontario by establishing the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board. The board has been having extensive hearings dealing with insurance rates and the structure of policies. I am wondering if the minister can provide some information about the operation of that board and, in particular, the cost of setting up and operating the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board.

**Hon. Mr. Elston:** I want to thank the member for the question, which I think is an important one for all of us, bearing in mind that there are some releases to be made later on this afternoon with respect to a rate-of-return formula out of one of the hearing processes that the auto insurance board is having.

The question of the budget for the board includes currently a staff of 31 people. The estimated full cost for the entire fiscal year is about \$7 million, including about \$2.6 million in onetime expenditures to provide a location at 5 Park Home Avenue for the board for offices. It includes as well the per diem for the six board members at \$200 a day, plus a remuneration for the chair and two vice-chairs of the operation. In addition to that, we have a number of other operating expenditures being made, and I can provide further detail to the member, upon request.

1450

**Mr. Fleet:** I am concerned about the cost of this, obviously, and I wonder if the minister can advise not only who is likely to be paying for the cost of this hearing but also whether there is any possibility of assisting the Consumers' Association of Canada and the other consumer-oriented groups that have been making submissions to the board and helping to further the process to ensure fair rates of automobile insurance for all Ontarians.



**Hon. Mr. Elston:** The question from the member is an important one, and I can tell the honourable gentleman that we are looking at recovering as much as possible the cost of the hearings through the board request.

With respect to the presentations of the Consumers' Association of Canada, we have found that it has provided a substantial presence in a number of the hearings, including cross-examination and the putting of evidence for us at the board. The board has indicated, along with the great co-operation it has received from members of the industry, that the overall process has worked quite well.

I am quite prepared to discuss, as I have on at least one occasion so far with the Consumers' Association, potential for funding arrangements. I can advise the honourable member that I appreciate his advocacy on behalf of the association and I will get back to him after discussions proceed somewhat further.

#### ATTENDANCE OF OPPOSITION MEMBERS

**Mr. Black:** My question is for the Minister of Mines and the government House leader. I must comment that the benches on this side of the House have never looked as good and I would point out to members that the average intelligence has risen several points in the last hour. However, my question—

**Mr. Speaker:** Do you have a question?

**Mr. Black:** Yes, I do have a question. I was just going to get to it.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you.

**Mr. Black:** Recognizing that the members of both opposition parties have decided not to take part in question period today leads me to suggest that there are two possible explanations. One would be that they are so supportive of the actions and policies of this government that they have no questions to ask. The second alternative would be that they are so lacking in intellect and wit that they were not able to frame any questions.

I wonder if the minister could give me his opinion on which of those two alternatives is the likely explanation.

**Hon. Mr. Conway:** If I might, I think the people of Ontario expect the duly elected members of this Legislature to meet in this place at the appointed hour each day to do the public's business. There is no question that there are important issues before this Legislature. This government this afternoon had 22 ministers in

their places when the Speaker called that order of business which is the daily question period.

I regret the actions of the honourable members of the opposition but, I think far more important we must all of us in public office accept our public responsibilities and deal with the issues before this province and before this Legislature. On behalf of the government, I want to make very clear: This government has an agenda. This Premier (Mr Peterson) has important business that he wants to put before and enact in this Legislature, and I think that is the concern of the people of Ontario and I hope that is the obligation that is faced by all members.

**Mr. Black:** Should we expect that the opposition may some day return for question period?

**Hon. Mr. Conway:** I think it is a reasonable expectation that reasonable men and women on all sides will take their responsibilities seriously and get on with the public's business.

#### MINING INDUSTRY

**Mr. Elliot:** I, too, have a question for the Minister of Mines. For some period of time now, the mining industry has been concentrating on the precious metal portion of that industry, and while it is doing this, the inventory of base metals is being seriously depleted throughout Ontario.

An attendant problem to this, brought to my attention by a number of people who reside in Halton North and have claims and mines is that when they try to get prospectors to actually go out and prospect to identify more resources, they find that the average age of prospectors now is something in the order of 80 years.

While I have nothing against experience, I do believe that the industry must do something fairly soon about training more prospectors. Is anything being done?

**Hon. Mr. Conway:** I thank the honourable member for his question. I can tell the honourable member that after a period when there was not a great deal of activity in the mineral development area, we have seen in the last number of years, largely as a result of the gold market, tremendous exploration and development. The honourable member is quite right that both at the prospecting end and for skilled miners we have faced a shortage as a result of tremendous surging activity in most of our mining communities.

The Minister of Skills Development (Mr. Curling) has been actively involved with the development of very positive programs, most of those under Ontario's Training Strategy. We

have been working with the community colleges, the local industrial training councils and, of course, the mining companies and labour to take additional measures.

Last evening I had the pleasure, with my friend opposite and other members on the other side of the House, to meet the miners at the Royal York Hotel. It is clear that more needs to be done and we are going to continue in a collaborative way to try to address the needs of this very important part of our resource community, which at the present time is expanding at a very attractive rate and producing very considerable new investment, wealth creation and employment in many communities across Ontario.

**Mr. Elliot:** My supplementary has to do with pointing out a specific program that has been very successful in the Ministry of Natural Resources, and that is the junior ranger program. Has there been any consideration given to starting such a program in the Ministry of Mines?

**Hon. Mr. Conway:** We have been looking at a number of ways and means of attracting new people to fill the opportunities that we know exist and will continue to be provided in the mineral development area. I know of the honourable member's particular interest. I will be meeting shortly with the Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada, at which time I will be quite pleased to take up the suggestion. As well, I expect very shortly to be talking to a number of the leaders in the community colleges to see what we might do at that level to excite a greater interest among young people about the exciting career opportunities that exist in the area of exploration and development in our mining communities.

#### FEDERAL BROADCASTING LEGISLATION

**Mrs. O'Neill:** My question is to the Minister of Culture and Communications. There has been a bill at the federal level, Bill C-136, regarding broadcasting legislation and the relationship of the federal cabinet to the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission, especially regarding licensing. Would the minister please update this House on the status of this bill.

**Hon. Ms. Oddie Munro:** I thank the member very much. The new broadcasting legislation is indeed overdue. The Broadcasting Act, which is being amended, is dated 1968. In 1985, the Caplan-Sauvageau task force conducted a very comprehensive study. Ontario was part of the input. The Minister of Communications then turned that report over to the standing committee

of culture and Ontario again had input to that committee.

The minister then undertook public hearings. It was at that point that this government made representation on those amendments which related to the CRTC, which is an arm's-length institution with the responsibilities of extensive licensing as it relates both to telecommunications and broadcasting.

We were indeed alarmed about any movements the federal cabinet may acquire as the result of legislation which allowed it to intervene in that agency's rights to disseminate licensing and, in fact, to deal with licensing requests through its board of commissioners.

**1500**

**Mrs. O'Neill:** Would the minister be able to bring us up to date on the actual intervention that Ontario is presently taking on this bill?

**Hon. Ms. Oddie Munro:** As soon as the new minister of culture is named, of course we will continue to make the federal government aware of our concerns on the bill as a whole and also on CRTC's powers. With new technologies again coming into the forefront, we are very much concerned about not only the intrusion on the CRTC by the federal cabinet, but also the giving to the CRTC of powers that it need not have which would allow it to be discriminatory and to stop any competition that is healthy, both for broadcasting and telecommunications.

We also have problems with some of the amendments that related to educational broadcasting and the power of the CRTC to define with the help of the federal cabinet what educational broadcasting is all about. We will be reminding the federal government that any powers in the Broadcasting Act cannot go beyond those powers relegated to provinces in the case of education. I would like to assure the member that this government will continue, through this ministry, to make Ontario's concerns known.

#### ELECTION FINANCES

**Mr. Tatham:** My question is for the Attorney General. Many people have been questioning the activities taking place during the last federal election. There are specific regulations for political parties and members as far as election expenses are concerned.

**Mr. Ballinger:** Speak up, Charlie.

**Mr. Tatham:** Can the member for Durham-York hear me over there? We want freedom of expression and democracy, but where is the line between freedom of expression and financial



encouragement when you have third-party multimillion-dollar expenditures?

**Hon. Mr. Scott:** I thank the honourable member for the question. I was elected only three years ago and had never been in politics before.

I am frankly astounded at what we have seen here today. There is one example, though. When I was in grade 8 at Holy Cross convent school in Ottawa, our class stayed out when the end of recess was called and the mother superior, who was Sister Mary of Nazareth, came out with a switch and gave it to each of us on the hand. Those boys and girls would be in their seats today if Sister Mary of Nazareth were alive.

**Mr. Speaker:** I presume you are leading up to a response.

**Hon. Mr. Scott:** I am leading up to an answer, Mr. Speaker, but I just want to emphasize that a touch of the switch never did anybody any harm in my experience, and we could be using it.

Now, to answer the question, the honourable member wants to give a touch of the switch to the large companies that participated by advertising in the last election. There is a certain fairness in what he suggests, because there are limits on the amount of advertising that political parties can do, so large companies or large trade unions or other large groups that have the interest of a political party at heart get on side, evading the restrictions on the parties themselves, by placing their own ads.

Of course this Legislature has no jurisdiction to deal with the question in a federal election. In a provincial election we do, and I will take notice of the honourable member's question and see how the issue can be presented so that, at least locally, we will be able to develop some response. A touch of the switch is very important, as the honourable member knows.

**Mr. Tatham:** I appreciate what the minister said and I just trust that he will take not only the switch, but two switches.

**Hon. Mr. Scott:** I take it now I can go as long as I want, because the clock is off, but I just want to thank the honourable member for his supplementary.

**Mr. Speaker:** That completes the allotted time for oral questions and responses. Petitions.

Interjection.

**Mr. Speaker:** If I could have your attention please, I have called for petitions.

## PETITION

### SCHOOL OPENING EXERCISES

**Mr. McCague:** I have a petition endorsed by 270 people from Stayner concerning the discon-

tinued use of the Lord's Prayer in our public schools.

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"We strongly protest the deletion of the Lord's Prayer from the opening exercises in our school system.

"As taxpayers, we were not given the choice to vote on this issue, nor have any say whatsoever in this matter, which is of grave concern to us.

"Ethnic and other religious groups have always had the opportunity to leave prior to the daily saying of the Lord's Prayer and have done so throughout the years.

"We feel this is an infringement of our rights and would like to see the Lord's Prayer reinstated in our schools."

## REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

### STANDING COMMITTEE ON GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Mr. Elliot from the standing committee on general government reported the following resolution:

That supply in the following amounts and to defray the expenses of the Ministry of the Environment be granted to Her Majesty for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1989:

Ministry administration program, \$30,099,500; environmental services program, \$82,067,700; environmental control program, \$77,190,800; utility planning and operations program, \$253,089,400.

### STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Mr. Epp from the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly reported the following resolution:

That supply in the following amount and to defray the expenses of the office of the chief election officer be granted to Her Majesty for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1989:

Office of the chief election officer program, \$618,600.

Mr. Epp, from the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly presented a report on the process for reviewing election laws.

**Mr. Epp:** In April the chief election officer and the members of his staff came before the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly to present a report on the proceedings and process of the last provincial election. Subsequently, they submitted a report to the Speaker and then



appeared again before the committee on August 2.

In 1984, the Election Act was revised to provide in part that the chief election officer be an officer of the assembly. However, except for the requirements for the chief election officer to report on the conduct of an election, no formal reporting relationship between the Legislative Assembly and the chief election officer exists. As a result of that, the committee has made a number of proposals for changes to the Election Act which previously have not been in effect.

The committee is of the opinion that the time has come for modification in the approach to the review of changes to the Election Act and the election process, and proposes that the chief election officer bring a report to the committee and return to the House, that the House have an opportunity, on a regular basis, to study various amendments to the act, and that this be done immediately following a general election.

There is a particular resolution we are proposing to the House, and that resolution is as follows:

That the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly undertake a comprehensive review of the report of the chief election officer including recommended legislative changes 1988...and other areas relating to the election process and report to the House its observations and recommendations thereon following public meetings for the hearing of representations of interested persons, and that the chief election officer provide such assistance to the committee as may be required by the committee to discharge its duties.

What we are actually asking for is something to expand on some of the provisions of the chief election officer that were provided for in 1984, and that we implement a regular process to review the act as it now exists and in the future.

I would ask for the unanimous consent of the House to have this two-page report on the process of reviewing election laws printed in today's Votes and Proceedings.

Agreed to.

1510

## INTRODUCTION OF BILL

### GEORGE A. McNAMARA MEMORIAL FOUNDATION ACT

Mr. Offer moved first reading of Bill Pr73, An Act to revive George A. McNamara Memorial Foundation.

Motion agreed to.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### RETAIL SALES TAX AMENDMENT ACT

#### LOI MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LA TAXE DE VENTE AU DÉTAIL

Hon. Mr. Grandmaître moved second reading of Bill 122, An Act to amend the Retail Sales Tax Act.

**Hon. Mr. Grandmaître:** This bill includes an increase in the general rate of sales tax from seven per cent to eight per cent, as well as containing amendments that will clarify definitions, strengthen penalty provisions and ensure equitable tax treatment of advertising supplements and answers.

The effective date of this bill, being May 2, 1988, was designed to provide time to communicate the new rate to all taxpayers and allow vendors to make changes.

Ce projet de loi prévoit l'augmentation du taux général de la taxe de vente au détail, qui passera de sept à huit pour cent, ainsi que certains amendements d'ordre administratif. Il n'est entré en vigueur que le 2 mai 1988, pour permettre aux contribuables de la province de prendre connaissance des modifications et pour laisser le temps aux vendeurs d'effectuer les changements nécessaires.

**Ms. Bryden:** Bill 122, An Act to amend the Retail Sales Tax Act, is one of several tax changes arising from the April 20, 1988, budget of the provincial Treasurer (Mr. R. F. Nixon).

The changes announced in that budget in our tax system really whacked Ontarians with the biggest tax increase in their history: \$1.5 billion in new taxes. It follows a no-tax-increase pre-election budget. It seems to me that playing politics with the province's finances in this way is not the fiscal responsibility that the Treasurer boasts about.

The budget mainly hits the low-income and middle-income people, who are already over-taxed. Raising the sales tax from seven per cent to eight per cent amounts to a 15 per cent hike and will hit low-income families and individuals the hardest, because it is still a regressive tax. Some people try to say that with the exemptions that are permitted and food not being covered, it is more of a proportionate tax than a regressive one. However, the trend in this province has been to remove exemptions rather than increase them and to extend the sales tax to all sorts of new services and new commodities that have not been taxed before.

What makes the debate on the retail sales tax increase from seven per cent to eight per cent



really crucial today is that it is part of a larger picture facing the Canadian nation. The recent election has indicated to us that it is part of that picture, because during the campaign there was considerable discussion of the proposed national sales tax which the federal Minister of Finance is considering. There are estimates that it could raise taxes, if it is extended widely, by as much as \$18 billion. In other words, whatever rate our sales tax is at would be simply a threshold for integrating our tax with a much more extensive national federal sales tax or, as it is sometimes called, a value-added tax or a national transaction tax.

We all know that during the election campaign, it was denied that it would be extended to food, but beyond that, the extensions would still be very extensive if they went as far as was suggested in terms of a turnover tax, as it is often called as well.

So when we are considering this bill, I think we have to consider whether we want to become part of that process of switching taxation greatly from its present mix of income and other taxes—liquor taxes, various taxes of that sort—to one that is mainly a consumer tax. This is what the issue is in this budget.

Regressivity means that taxes are not based on ability to pay. Certainly the present sales tax in Ontario is regressive. We noted that the first big step in the extension of that tax to a variety of items that were not covered was in the 1982 Miller budget, which was introduced by the Progressive Conservative government. That was when they put the tax on hot dogs, sanitary supplies and things of that sort. While those raised a lot of objections, they also extended it to a great many other services and things that had not been taxed before.

For instance, they put it on most municipal expenditures for supplies, bus repairs, parts, things incorporated into structures owned by schools, colleges, universities and public hospitals or owned by municipalities and local boards. This was a real grab at the municipal tax dollar. While the Treasurer says that the municipalities are compensated by the fact that they get larger grants from the province, there is no evidence that the grants they would have got take into account the extra costs of extending the tax to all these things purchased by municipalities and local governments.

**1520**

When Mr. Miller brought his tax in, the current Premier (Mr. Peterson) rose in the House to ask a question, and the question was, "Are you

extending this tax to hit the poor, because more of the extensions hit ordinary people buying small amounts than the larger ones?" The Premier expressed concern that he did not believe one should tax the poor. I had the Hansard clipping here, but I have not located it at the moment.

At any rate, in those days, the Liberal speeches were against the regressivity of the sales tax and against the extensions, but now they appear to have swung to the camp of Mr. Wilson, the federal Minister of Finance, because whenever the Treasurer has been asked if he is contemplating the proposed federal turnover tax, he does not deny that he is considering it. In fact, he says that he has people in his ministry who are looking at it. He has not asserted that he would not accept extension to food or the kinds of wide extensions that are being considered.

I think we have to consider the fact that the results of the federal election indicate that there are a lot of promises to be paid for there. If they are going to be paid for by more and more regressive sales taxes, then we are in for a very bad picture for the middle income, the low income and the poor in this country.

Now they talk about a refundable tax credit to offset that tax, and the province has enriched in this most recent budget the sales tax credit, but if you examine it closely, it is really peanuts that is being offered and nothing similar to what is needed to offset the burden that the new sales tax is going to put on the ordinary income earner.

The new tax credit program, according to the Treasurer, is going to cost \$84 million more. He is lumping together a new property tax credit as well as the sales tax credit, so it is not a very true figure of the sales tax extra cost, and he shows only the joint figure in his budget.

The point is that to compensate average people, especially those who are below the poverty line, would require at least \$400 million just to bring the property tax credits up to the position of their original value. To compensate the people who would be affected by Mr. Nixon-Wilson's joint new national sales tax, which they may bring in, would be hundreds of millions of dollars to give them any sort of offset to that kind of taxation.

I think we are moving in this country to much too great a reliance on consumer taxes and much too little on increased corporation taxes, for one thing. In the last provincial Treasurer's budget there was not one increase in the corporation taxes; in fact, there were decreases. There were additional tax concessions handed out to the



corporations, and there was no minimum corporation tax introduced. Even the United States has a minimum corporation tax now, but outside of the very minor capital tax on corporations, there is no minimum corporation tax in this country, so that the percentage of tax revenue received from the corporations is continually going down while the percentage from income tax and sales tax is going up radically. This is why we must stop this trend towards relying on consumer taxes of all kinds—gasoline taxes as well, which always penalize the person who has to use his car the most, possibly for his work. He may not be a high-income earner, he may not be driving a Cadillac, but his costs will be much higher than those of the ordinary person who just drives his car for pleasure.

In the north, of course, it is an additional penalty because of the great distances, yet we still have the same gasoline tax in both northern and southern Ontario. The sales tax also hits the northerners greatly, because they not only pay the eight per cent tax on everything they consume that is not exempt from the sales tax but they also pay the tax on the freight costs, which are worked into the prices of their goods and services. That is a very great burden on the north, because of the distances and because of the high freight rates that are allowed in that area. There is a double burden on the northern people in relation to this sales tax.

There is a small increase in the income tax in this budget, one per cent on the basic federal tax in 1988 and one per cent in 1989, but this is really not going to compensate for the lower tax rates that are being enjoyed under the federal budget at the moment, the lowering of tax rates. It really means that Ontario is just grabbing a piece of the current federal reduction in income tax rates. Nobody is gaining from them. In addition, they are now paying more sales tax. The inclusion of a couple of surtax points on the income tax is not a real change in the proportion contributed by income taxes in this province as compared to the very large proportion that is going to be contributed by sales taxes.

The whole question of what will come out of the recent election was discussed in the newspapers in the last two or three days. I think they point out that if all these promises are to be fulfilled, where will the government get the money? Will it go to additional corporation tax, or will it say that, under free trade, it will be a decrease in competitive position if it taxes the corporations further? They have built into this free trade agreement that is being promoted by

the government that won the election—it is not necessarily a majority of the Canadian people—but those who voted for a majority government will have the whole question put to them of whether you should increase income taxes or corporation taxes at all put to them when it comes to the question of deciding how we pay for all these promises and whether we are able to tax businesses more if their competitive position will be impaired? I think that is a very serious question and indicates that this province, at least, should be looking for a fairer tax system. We certainly are departing radically from that, budget by budget.

### 1530

The sales tax has an interesting history in that it was first established in 1967 at three per cent, and has gone up to eight per cent since then. It was started sooner in other provinces. Interestingly enough, Alberta was the first province to get into it, but stayed in only about six months, which indicates that Alberta needed it to solve a temporary problem of relief payments in the Depression, but decided that it was better to rely on its other sources of wealth such as the oil and tax industry and the middle classes.

The previous government was tending towards more and more regressive taxes as well, but in this budget we have outdone anything that it did by extending the tax and taking this \$1.5 billion extra.

We should look at the impact of this new sales tax on the housing industry since we are in a period of great housing shortage, particularly in this section of the province. If Mr. Wilson's tax comes in, it will add literally hundreds of thousands of dollars to what home buyers are going to have to pay on the materials going into the houses, on the services that are provided, on the mortgage costs and all those angles that will be covered. The eight per cent is no small increase in the cost of a house so that, in effect, we are pricing more and more people out of the housing market.

Another area that will be badly affected by this sales tax will be that of students at colleges and universities. First, the costs of the universities will go up since they will have to pay sales tax on many of the materials they buy and on the buildings that must be renovated, repaired or replaced. The universities already are greatly underfunded, but this will simply take a larger piece of their revenues for contributions to the provincial Treasurer.

It is the provincial Treasurer who has put them in their present underfunded position. Enrolment



is going up at the universities and colleges, but people are being forced to use classrooms that are too small for the number there and services are being cut. The size of the classes is being increased and, generally, the whole educational system is very badly affected by this kind of taxation.

Really, since we need trained people in this province to develop our economy and to be able to keep industry competitive here, the province should be contributing a great deal more to education than it is. If it takes the proceeds of this extra one per cent sales tax and does not apply it to any substantial increases in university funding and university facilities, it is simply robbing Peter to pay Paul; that is, robbing the taxpayers but not providing additional funding for the areas where it should be moving more resources into an area.

We are very disappointed in how this extra one per cent is being spent at the moment. There seems to be more money for rather wild ideas like the IDEA Corp. and other promotions of new, experimental industries or the attempt to develop new industries, but not enough background in the way of research and development in the universities and training for people who are going to be able to bring us really new development.

We would have liked to have seen the Treasurer not increase the sales tax but to go to the corporations and to the higher-income earners for additional sources of revenue to see that these areas are looked after.

Then, of course, there is the whole question of health care. We all know it is badly underfunded, yet the Treasurer seems to be talking about covering it through taking control of the lottery funds that are available.

If you take a chunk of the lottery funds that are now used for sports and recreation and culture, you have less money for those bodies and more for hospitals perhaps, but the hospital crisis is so great that the half a million that appears to come from lottery proceeds—or even with the expanded lotteries—would not nearly touch the real needs of the hospitals and of the health care system.

Therefore, to lead people to think that simply giving control of the lottery funds to the Treasurer will provide a solution to the hospital deficit problem, and the hospital bed problem and the hospital services that we need, is really being very misleading and does not justify increasing the sales tax, because the Treasurer is going to have to find money for sports and recreation and culture as well.

We think it is time that the Treasurer took a good look at the revenue sources of this province and tried to develop them into sources that would be fair taxation. At the moment, the middle class and the lower groups are still paying far more than their fair share.

When the province amended the corporation tax earlier, it not only did not decrease the tax concessions that were available, it increased them for mines and the corporations and it did not decrease the exemption for capital gains, in spite of the fact that the federal government was also giving a very big concession to capital gains earners. That is another source of revenue that could be looked at. We are not getting what we would expect in that area.

I would like to remind the minister that Ontario did issue a tax expenditure survey in 1986. That was after the Liberal government came in. It was something that we had been requesting for a considerable time. The federal government had pioneered in this field and had released a tax expenditure report. The definition of "tax expenditure" is somewhat of a matter of controversy, but in the book it defines it as representing a deferral of taxes payable rather than an absolute reduction or providing an incentive to encourage certain types of behaviour that government regards as desirable.

#### 1540

The main point is that a tax expenditure is a grant, but it is a grant not in the form of an outright cheque being issued to a company applying for it. It is a back-door grant which is not reported to the Legislature in detail by the company receiving it and it is not passed or voted on by the Legislative Assembly. It is simply taking money out of the tax system and giving it to a company as some sort of an incentive or concession or reduction in tax, and the rest of us make up the difference. So, if the Treasurer's budget calls for X dollars and 10 per cent of this is going out in tax expenditures, we never vote on that 10 per cent of his total expenditures. That is not really budgetary control.

I think the hidden benefits bestowed by governments are something that we must open up and it would give us the opportunity to develop a fairer tax system if we had an annual report on the amount of tax expenditures and to what categories of companies they were going. If they are deferred taxes, at what stage will they ever be repaid or are they simply really a forgivable tax that goes on in perpetuity? It is time we got up to date and produced reports of this type.



I find it difficult to see very much difference between the Liberals and the Progressive Conservatives in their tax policies. They seem to think that the objective is to tax where they can with the least squawks rather than to develop a tax system that will be truly an incentive to invest in things that will create jobs and to invest in the future of our province and our people.

To use the complete marketplace approach that we appear to be adopting now and that will come in an even greater amount after this so-called free trade deal goes through, is really to change the whole concept of what role taxes play in our economy. This is why I think we should oppose this increase at the present time and insist on a much greater review of the whole tax system.

On the history of the sales tax, I was mentioning how ancient it is, but the first retail sales tax in Canada came in on May 1, 1935, in Montreal, because it had a very high relief debt at that time. In Alberta, it came in May 1, 1936; the same sort of Depression problem, to try to pay the extra costs of a recession or depression. We think that is not a reason for having a sales tax. It is a reason for having some action to create employment, to create jobs. But the Alberta tax only lasted from May 1, 1936, to August 6, 1937, so it was very short-lived.

In 1961, Ontario imposed its first sales tax at three per cent, in 1969 raised it to five per cent and then in 1973 to seven per cent. But during the restraint period it reduced the seven per cent to five per cent as Ontario's contribution, and this was from April 18, 1975, to October 31, 1975, a very short period. A lot of the transactions were, I think, postponed or the dates were adjusted so that they would not come in on the higher tax any sooner than they had to.

Anyway, in 1976 it went back to seven per cent, until this Liberal government jumped it again to eight per cent; so it has been with us a long time, but we have not looked sufficiently at alternatives to it. Instead, we are getting locked into more and more consumer taxes and sales taxes, and these are what we have to start challenging.

Also, we are being told that sales taxes are not bad if you have a refundable tax credit, but if you look at the history of those tax credits, they benefit only the very poor. The person who is just above the threshold is very seriously taxed, because if you are \$1 over the threshold you get the full tax and if you are under, you get the refundable tax credit. That makes for a very unfair adjustment at that level, and sometimes it

amounts really to a confiscation of any additional earning until you get quite a bit above the threshold. So I think we have to question whether the refundable tax credits are the real answer to the regressiveness of the retail sales tax.

I did want to recall to the Legislature that when this tax increase first was brought in as part of the budget on April 20, we, the New Democrats, voted against it on first reading and asked that after second reading there be public hearings across the province on the question of whether the tax should go through. You may recall that the government first refused to guarantee any public hearings, outside the House particularly and around the province. It took a whole week of protests and switching the business of the House to other business before the government would give any assurance that there would be public hearings. You may recall it was considered pressure tactics to read petitions into the record instead of getting on with the business.

But when members of the Legislature are not satisfied with the way the business is being conducted and they are not getting any assurances that democracy will be served, that there will be opportunities for public hearings on a very controversial bill of this sort, I think those tactics are justified. They may vary from time to time. I am not necessarily saying they would always be petition-reading or that there would sometimes be longer bell-ringing than one would expect, but the thing is, a government that promised in its election campaigns that it would be open was departing radically from that position when it refused to guarantee public hearings.

While the House leader claimed that he had never denied public hearings, he had certainly denied public hearings outside the House, and preferably during the recess when there would be time for the committee to travel.

**1550**

Finally, after about 10 days of pressure, the government did climb down and agree to public hearings. I think the public of Ontario can be thankful that one more element of democracy in this province was preserved as a result of our actions in making sure that this bill does go out to public hearings around the province.

The Progressive Conservatives supported us on this, so that when you have two oppositions saying that this is not a democratic process that is going on here and that you are ramming through very unfair taxes and very unfair tax increases, then I think it is time to say that the public must be heard before you make this decision. We are



hoping that after the hearings perhaps the government might decide to withdraw the extra one per cent increase and impose some more taxes on corporations that have been really getting off scott-free in this province for so many years.

The fact that there are literally thousands, 40,000 or 50,000 corporations in this province that pay no federal or provincial income tax indicates that we have a very weak system of getting their share into the provincial Treasury. And as long as we keep electing governments that are prepared to prolong this kind of tax unfairness, we are going to have governments that are not representative of the wishes of the majority of the people but are representative only of the business groups that can qualify for these tax-free situations. That is getting to the stage where we do not have fairness and we do not have the openness that was promised by this government in the election campaigns of 1985 and 1987.

This is a time to reconsider and to take a very serious look at this proposed national turnover tax—whatever you want to call it—before we make any further changes in our regressive taxes. Therefore, I think this is a good reason for voting against this bill at this stage, or asking the government to withdraw it until we see much more clearly where we are going in this country on new tax policies.

Ed Broadbent said he represented the average Canadian. Well, the average Canadian is going to be badly hurt by any turnover tax, and it will affect a lot of people who have very low incomes as well: single parents, the disabled and those on assistance who do not get enough to offset all the extra costs they will be facing under a turnover tax. They will not be assured of any offsetting compensation until it is all worked through the various provincial legislatures as well as the federal parliament.

I think this is not an area where we should be taking a leap in the dark. We should be holding our tax position and working towards greater fairness. That, I would hope, would mean reducing sales tax over time and replacing it by more progressive provincial taxes and less regressive taxes.

On that note, I will suggest that the government consider withdrawing the bill or suggesting a fairer tax system for Ontario.

**Hon. Mr. Grandmaitre:** The member for Beaches-Woodbine has put a lot of emphasis on this increase in the retail sales tax, that this government does not care for poor people or the

low-income families of this province. I just wanted to remind her that on page 12 of the budget—and I think I should read this part of the budget of April 20, the Ontario tax assistance programs; it is only three short paragraphs—it says:

“Federal tax reform changed several key definitions used in calculating the benefits from Ontario’s tax credit program, tax reduction program and OHIP premium assistance.

“As the Ontario government wishes to maintain and enhance its assistance and to ensure that low-income people can continue to rely on the important protection under these programs, I am proposing to introduce revisions to compensate for the effects of the federal tax reform to enrich benefits. The significant support that these programs will provide to people who most need it will help to improve the fairness of Ontario’s tax system.

“The new property and sales tax credit programs will deliver \$444 million in tax credit benefits to over 1.8 million low-income Ontarians to ensure fairer property and sales tax burdens.

“Sales tax credits will be set at \$100 per adult and \$50 per child, more than doubling the total benefits for low-income households under this program.”

I can go on, Mr. Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Your time has expired.

**Ms. Bryden:** I mentioned that the budget lumps together the increase in property tax credits and sales tax credits, and it amounts to only \$84 million for the two. It has been estimated that we would need \$400 million to bring the property tax credit just up to its original value when it was established many years ago.

Actually, the new property tax credit is increased only from \$230 to \$250 per family, but fewer will qualify, because the new rate is based on total family income and goes down as the total family, including others living in the household, are counted. So while the maximum credit is increased from \$500 to \$1,000, the rental amount goes up from \$230 to \$250. That is right there in the budget.

We still do not know how much the sales tax credit will amount to as a compensation for the new sales tax, but certainly \$100 per person and \$50 per child is really peanuts compared to what it is going to cost the people who spend practically all of their income on consumable items, whereas the person who has a lot of disposable income after taxes and does not have to spend nearly as much on food, housing and



shelter will not pay an equivalent percentage of his income on sales tax. So, in effect, it really is still a very regressive tax. The fact that a richer person spends more money on housing and so on, does not indicate that they are paying their fair share.

1600

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. M. C. Ray):** The member's time has expired. The next speaker is the member for Simcoe West.

**Mr. McCague:** Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker, and congratulations on your recent appointment.

I have been listening carefully this afternoon both to the New Democratic Party response and to the remarks made by the minister. I had understood earlier that we were considering Bill 122, which is An Act to amend the Retail Sales Tax Act, but I did notice in the comments from my colleague in the NDP and in the response of the minister that really what we are discussing here is the budget, because the chair did not interrupt at any point in time and bring to the attention of the House that it was Bill 122 that we were discussing and he let anything go as far as budget was concerned. I think I can take from that a signal that I can talk about anything I wish over the next three or four hours on the budget.

There was a nod to that.

I must say that I feel a little sympathy for the Minister of Revenue (Mr. Grandmaître), whose bill this really is not. It is a bill that originates from the budget, the statement made by the Treasurer, which the minister is now obliged to defend. I always thought that was an unfair system. If the Treasurer thinks it was worth doing, he should be here to defend his own actions. Of course, seldom did we see any criticism of the Minister of Revenue in the articles in the paper, the editorials and so forth, but rather criticism of the Treasurer and, in particular, of the government as a whole.

The member for Scarborough-Ellesmere (Mr. Faubert) seems to agree with that. However, the two of them, as much as they are rather an odd couple, will, I am sure, defend Bill 122, even though we and the NDP would like to see him withdraw the one per-cent increase in the retail sales tax, which, incidentally, is little understood by most people to be about a 15 per cent increase in the amount of retail sales tax levied.

With those few opening remarks, I would like to have a chat with the Minister of Revenue and his assistant this afternoon and whenever next.

Everybody is saying that the retail sales tax is regressive. It is applied regardless of one's

ability to pay. Thus, it has a much larger impact on the poor and the low-income persons than it does on the well-to-do.

In 1982, in response to a budget by our party which expanded the retail sales tax but which did not increase the tax rate, the member for London Centre (Mr. Peterson) described the measure as regressive and inflationary and said that it would signal "a change in the philosophy of taxation. We saw a move away from the progressive system which we, as Liberals, believe in passionately, taxation that is based on the ability to pay, and we saw a major move towards flat consumption and regressive taxes."

**Mr. Mackenzie:** It is called say one thing and mean another.

**Mr. McCague:** The member is certainly right on.

The Liberals' own record shows that they left their passionate belief in progressive taxation behind them on the opposition benches. The families most likely to be hardest hit by this budget, and particularly by the sales tax increase, are likely to be those who make just over \$25,000 a year, the income cutoff for taxation credits, and up to \$60,000 a year, the income level above which the impact of sales tax decreases. Thus, those on a low income and the middle class are going to bear the brunt of this tax increase.

Sales taxes, as the minister well knows, are inflationary. The increase will probably increase the province's inflation rate by one half of a percentage point. Even the analysis of the Treasurer shows the Ontario consumer price index increasing from 4.3 per cent to 4.7 per cent as a consequence of the budget measures. The Liberals have done nothing to help control inflation or to reduce inflationary expectations. On the expenditures side, they have increased their spending at a rate double the average rate of inflation. Their tax policies have put upward pressure on the inflation rate. The Liberal government has a policy of inflation by example.

The sales tax increases were unnecessary, I would suggest to the minister. If, just if, he had decided that he was going to raise the sales tax by one per cent and dedicate that as an increase in the activity in the health sector, he might have gotten away with it. But there is nothing that has yet been shown to us in the opposition parties to indicate that the one per cent increase in retail sales tax was necessary.

Even if the Liberals had not increased one single solitary tax in the 1988-89 budget, government revenues would have increased by 8.2 per cent, or by \$2.8 billion, over last year's



inflows—\$2.8 billion more for him to toy with over there. In other words, economic growth alone would have given the government nearly \$3 billion more to spend this year than it had last year. But that was not enough for the Liberals, who have adopted a tax, tax, spend, spend approach to fiscal management. This year the Ontario government tax revenues will be 72 per cent greater than they were in 1984-85. The retail sales tax collection will be up more than 75 per cent over the same period.

The Treasurer should follow the advice that the Premier gave the Progressive Conservative Treasurer during the 1982 budget debate. At that point, he said: "He has lots of options. If he had not given money away, he would not have had to raise money. You always have to look at your expenditure side if you are going to look at your revenue side. He did not have to go to a regressive, flat consumption sales tax in order to raise that revenue." It is amazing how those words come home to haunt one.

If a person wanted to read through a massive number of Hansards and quote back to the Treasurer the things he said about the budgets that he had to criticize, it would be amazing. The Treasurer has often come to me and said: "Please, George, do not read that stuff back to me. I just hate it." I know why he hates it, because he completely changed his mind over a period of six weeks.

The government maintains that it is committed to an affordable housing policy—indeed, that affordable housing is one of its top priorities. However, it has pursued tax policies that have directly contributed to increased housing prices. In his first budget, the current Treasurer increased the land transfer tax. That tax now equals almost one per cent of the value of the real estate conveyed. According to a former president of the Ontario Home Builders' Association, this government made an extra \$200 million this year alone from the increased land transfer tax.

It has been estimated that the measures proposed in Bill 122 will increase the cost of building a house by between \$1,500 and \$2,000. The minister grabbed \$200 million more in land transfer tax. Now he is trying to grab about another \$75 million, I estimate, in this tax as it applies to the increased value of houses.

1610

It has been estimated that the application of the sales tax to ready mix and asphalt mix will increase the cost of the average \$200,000 house by \$900. Thus, the government's tax policies have contributed directly to increasing the cost of

home ownership and have allowed the government to profiteer in a hot housing market to the point where it has been suggested that the government should think of imposing a speculation tax on itself, a speculation tax not, as is being advocated by some people here in the House, on others but on itself.

The Liberal concept of fiscal responsibility seems to depend entirely on the number of seats they have in the House. In 1987, when the Liberals were in a minority position, the Treasurer tabled a pre-election budget in which fiscal responsibility meant—and listen to this—no new taxes or tax increases. In 1988, with the red tie party comfortably in control of the House, fiscal responsibility means the biggest tax grab in Ontario's history. Again, the Premier's own words best describe the switch. In 1982, he said of the budgetary policies of the former government:

"There is no integrity of fiscal policy or fiscal philosophy. The only integrity demonstrated is an integrity to get themselves elected. They distort in the billions of dollars and are prepared to use unlimited taxpayers' funds to subvert them to public purposes. That is why people in opposition, those of us who see their shenanigans daily, get a little bit cynical."

End of the present Premier's quote. Shame. The sales tax increase and other tax increases in the budget are nothing less than a bushwhack attack on the Ontario taxpayer. Last fall the Liberals managed to get through the entire election campaign without once mentioning even a possibility of a tax increase, let alone the possibility that a majority Liberal government would cost an additional \$1.3 billion a year in new taxes. I am not sure what you call that. There are names for it.

**Mr. Mackenzie:** And we do not even see any shame over this direct reversal.

**Mr. McCague:** The member for Scarborough-Ellesmere keeps his head down and the Minister of Revenue is going to tell me he did not write the budget. However, we will have a chat with him in any event.

The increase in the retail sales tax, along with the increase in the personal income tax rate, will reduce the benefits of federal tax reform to the Ontario taxpayer. Apparently the Liberal government could not bear the thought that the taxpayer could end up with a few more dollars in his pocket instead of in the provincial coffers. This is particularly galling, since over the next five years Ontario Treasury savings from federal



tax reform will add up to more than \$500 million, primarily due to increases in the corporate tax.

The Treasurer—and I am sure the minister will convey this—should be reminded that when leader of the official opposition, he seconded a motion condemning the 1973 budget for a number of reasons, among them being primarily “the imposition of tax increases of any kind which counteract the initiatives taken by the federal government to spur the economy through the reduction of taxes.”

I am not exactly sure, but I think in 1973 they probably had a different kind of government in Ottawa, a different kind of government here and the Treasurer felt quite comfortable in making a statement like the one I just quoted, and this is it again, condemning “the imposition of tax increases of any kind which counteract the initiatives taken by the federal government to spur the economy through the reduction of taxes.”

Now, is that not terrible? What a change of mind. The Liberals are so desperate for cash that the bill will impose a tax on a tax and, in so doing, will add \$20 million a year to the phone bills of Ontario consumers. We had witnesses before us at the standing committee on finance and economic affairs last week who estimate that when the tax on a phone bill is totalled up, if your bill is \$100, you are paying around \$25 in tax. That is a lot of money.

Before the budget, phone charges were subject to the federal sales tax and the provincial sales tax. However, the Ontario government has now applied its tax not only to the amounts charged by Bell Canada but also to the federal tax on those amounts. This is a most unfair tax, since it treats a sales tax by one level of government as consumption, even though consumers derive no direct benefit from it and have no choice with regard to incurring the tax expense.

It should also be noted that, while other federal sales and excise taxes are included in the retail price on which provinces apply their sales taxes, they are imposed at the manufacturers’ or wholesale level. The Liberals have taken Bell Canada at its word and reached out and touched someone—in this case, the consumers. They have touched them for an additional \$20 million a year.

The Treasurer’s contribution to the federal election campaign consisted of ruminations on the amount of additional revenue that might be raised by the federal government if a national sales tax were instituted. The Treasurer justified his intervention by saying, “It seems to me that

taxpayers ought to be aware at least of some of the aspects that may very well be enacted before we have a chance to pass judgement again as electors.”

While this is a noble sentiment, it begs the question of why the Treasurer did not feel compelled to be as forthcoming with Ontario electors during the last provincial election campaign, when he had every opportunity to tell them that a Liberal government would cost them \$1.3 billion in new taxes.

Also, the Treasurer has never ruled out participating in the national sales tax program and has in fact outlined the conditions which would have to be met for Ontario to consider participating in such a program.

In February 1987, the Treasurer was speculating that the federal tax proposals could enable the province to reduce its sales tax rate, which was then seven per cent. It would be interesting to learn if the Treasurer still thinks that is a possibility. If he does, we could probably do it during consideration of this bill.

This bill will increase the cost to major transfer-of-payment recipients and especially to municipalities. I think the minister has heard this before, but as a result of this bill, the city of London will pay an additional \$607,000 a year in provincial taxes; Windsor, for instance, \$744,000; Durham region \$250,000; Sudbury region \$135,000, and Waterloo region \$355,000.

The Treasurer should know that he has increased the provincial tax bill for Ontario municipalities by anywhere from \$100,000 to \$480,000 in this fiscal year and that the annualized cost of additional taxes on a municipality can run as high as \$607,000, as I mentioned.

I believe that raising the retail sales tax from seven to eight per cent will raise an additional \$820 million in this fiscal year and close to \$1 billion in a full year. This increase will cost a married couple with two children, earning \$35,000 a year, an additional \$112. It is odd that with the buoyant economy and with the seven per cent tax that has been in effect since 1973 the Treasurer would find it necessary to make the increase when everything is going so well with the economy.

**1620**

I am sure that during the consideration of the budget earlier on and with the introduction of these bills and the tabling of the budget, all members of this House received many letters from constituents expressing their opinion about



the increase from seven to eight per cent. For the information of the minister and his assistant, I would like to read one or two of these complimentary letters into the record. This is to the Treasurer:

"Your budget is one more example of a government that is out of touch with the people. It is hard enough to make ends meet now without raising the tax to eight per cent and increasing taxes on gasoline. These steps only take money away from the low- and middle-income families without having a substantial effect on high-income earners and corporations.

"I am sure that you will be getting more letters such as this one due to your unfair budget."

A letter which the member for Sarnia (Mr. Brandt) received from a Mr. Vangeloff in St. Catharines reads:

"Dear Mr. Brandt,

"Here is a sensational headline to be repeated in all newspapers except the Toronto Daily Red Star.

"1. The budget must have been drawn up by a drunken sailor who had just got his pay, spent it all and now is trying to get an advance.

"2. One per cent more on sales tax. Does he realize how much of one's disposable income diminishes over a year? We all have budgets to which we must adhere like the pygmy peacock Premier, his Merlin Treasurer and 94 turkeys pull in their ministers' belts.

"3. Another cent a litre on gasoline. Does the Grit administration realize how much that will add to operating costs of transportation for all of us as well as add to the cost of transporting goods to the consumers?

"4. The SkyDome. Let Mr. Peterson and his cabinet consider cutting the spending of taxpayers' money on this costly venture. Let private enterprise finish the job. It has been reported as being six weeks behind and now the unions are striking. May I suggest that they stay out on strike and let the SkyDome stand until they come back begging for work. As a taxpayer"—

**Mr. Pouliot:** Oh, come on.

**Mr. McCague:** I am reading a letter.

"As a taxpayer I am tired of subsidizing certain people. If they feel so much for the workers, let them stop picking their paycheques.

"The provincial government has set up a bad example by igniting the inflation spiral by taking money out of the individual taxpayers and private industry. The buoyant economy of Ontario will suddenly skid to a trickle as the consumer closes his or her purse as his or her budget is thrown out. The final result before the year is out will be

private business cutting expenses by laying off part-time and even full-time workers.

"Then there is the income tax increase—one per cent a year until it is 52 per cent of the Dominion income tax. Now, as the church lady would say, 'Isn't that special.'"

"The Premier and his Grits better open the gates of fortress Ontario to free trade. That is the only way they may increase revenue."

No problem understanding what that fellow has to say at least.

**Mr. Faubert:** Not that we agree with it.

**Mr. McCague:** I was quoting, I say to the parliamentary assistant.

**Mr. South:** Was it on blue paper?

**Mr. McCague:** It is white. Please remind the member not to interject, Mr. Speaker.

The single largest beneficiary of the six-year economic boom that we have enjoyed in this province has been the Ontario Liberal government. Strong economic growth and hefty tax increases have bloated government coffers, and the Liberals' love of spending the taxpayers' money seems surpassed only by their desire to tax it.

Two of the four budgets tabled by the Liberal government, the 1985-86 budget and the 1988-89 budget, have included substantial increases, and the Liberal government clearly shows that it is an ardent supporter of capital punishment: If you have any capital, they will punish you for it.

The 1988-89 budget proposes the single largest tax grab in Ontario history, a fact not changed by the Treasurer's frenzied efforts to minimize the size of the tax grab by using statistical gymnastics to inflate the magnitude of tax increases contained in some previous Progressive Conservative budgets.

In his eagerness to convince the taxpayer that the 1988-89 revenue ripoff is not nearly as bad or as big as everyone else seems to think it is, the Treasurer has forgotten one essential fact. Unlike the current Treasurer, no previous Treasurer in this decade enjoyed the luxury of bringing down a budget after six successive years of economic expansion. In point of fact, previous Treasurers had to deal with the impact of the longest and most severe international recession since the Depression of the 1930s.

Far from having to deal with the problems of growth—a sweet headache, as the Premier has referred to them—PC governments had to cope with the real pain of economic contraction, high unemployment and interest rates and the impact of these on the province's revenues and costs of social and employment support services.

Nor does the Treasurer make any mention of the fact that the last PC budget of 1984-85, which was the only one introduced when the recovery was well entrenched, did not increase a single one of the province's major taxes.

By comparison, a Treasurer who has never known anything except boom times has imposed two rounds of major tax increases in the province. The Liberal record during an economic boom begs the question of how they will manage if the economy turns down. The Premier and his colleagues in the Liberal Party managed to get through the entire 1987-88 election campaign without mentioning what they were going to do, as I repeat.

While the 1988-89 budget hits just about everyone, the long-suffering middle class bears the brunt of the Liberal tax looting. As a consequence of the budget, a taxpayer earning \$40,000 will be hit with taxes in the neighbourhood of \$150.

One of the taxes, while it does have an environmental plus, is the equalizing of the leaded and unleaded taxes. For example, in the main, you have lower-income people driving cars which probably use leaded gas and you have people in the higher-income brackets driving cars which use unleaded gas, so the penalty really hit at the lower-income people in that particular case.

A two-income family of four which owns its own home with one spouse earning \$35,000 and the other \$18,000 will pay an additional \$59 this year in provincial income tax and an additional \$153 in retail sales tax. Their only salvation lies in the fact that the federal tax reform will reduce their provincial income tax bill by \$182, giving them a net increase of \$30.

Even the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Revenue, the member for Scarborough-Ellesmere, must feel ashamed to have the federal government give people something on one hand and have his Treasurer and his Minister of Revenue take all of it, plus \$30, away.

**1630**

Again, the additional tax bill will be higher if the couple smokes, drinks, drives or makes any big-ticket purchases. For example, if they were to buy a car for \$14,000, the Treasurer and company would nail them for an additional \$140. Smokers, drinkers and drivers were hard hit. A driver who uses leaded fuel in his car will have to fork over an additional four cents a litre in tax, three cents more than his friend in the car next to him, which uses unleaded fuel, who will have to pay only an additional cent a litre in tax. As a

result of the budget, a 45-litre fill-up with leaded fuel will cost an extra \$1.80 and the same fill-up with unleaded will cost an additional 45 cents.

As he sits in traffic, fuming over the fact that the budget will cost him an additional \$96 a year in gasoline taxes, our taxpayer can light up a smoke, which will now cost him an extra quarter for a pack of 25. It is enough to drive a person to drink. But drinking is no way to escape from this budget, as it will cost an additional 50 cents in taxes to buy a case of 24 beer and another 10 cents in taxes to buy a standard bottle of liquor or wine. This poor fellow can just kiss goodbye any savings he hoped to realize as a result of federal tax reform. His money will simply end up in the provincial pocket by a different route.

Couples looking to buy a new home will no doubt be thrilled to learn that the cost of a new home in Metropolitan Toronto can be expected to increase by up to \$2,000 as a result of the budget. If they do buy a home and have to furnish it, they can look forward to paying an additional \$150 in sales tax on \$15,000 of spending on furniture, appliances and fixtures. All of this is in addition to having to pay the increased land transfer tax, which the Liberals hiked in their 1985-86 budget, a measure that added \$355 in additional land transfer taxes to the cost of an average home in Metro.

As can be seen from the above, life in David Peterson's Ontario is a very taxing matter. Taxpayers horrified by the budget may have forgotten that this is the second time the Premier has hit them where it hurts. In its first budget, of 1985-86, the Liberal government hit the taxpayer with 13 tax increases and other measures designed to enrich its coffers, which included a four per cent increase in the personal income tax rate. From 1985-86 to the end of the fiscal year 1988-89, the 1985-86 budget measures will have raised an estimated \$2.5 billion in revenue for the government, including \$892 million this year.

Those items I have mentioned are quite often forgotten by the average taxpayer who walks up to the till, asks how much a certain item is or brings up how much a certain item is and pays the bill. But until the taxes are brought to his attention, he sometimes does not complain about it.

I know in our discussions in the standing committee on finance and economic affairs, it has been mentioned that the 12 per cent federal tax on some items is a hidden tax, and the then seven per cent and now eight per cent tax is a more visible tax. While that is true, I think a lot of people pay the bill without really understanding



or stopping to think about what the impact of it is. That does not mean that the government, while it may have the right, should be allowed to increase those taxes at will.

It was interesting during the discussions we had in committee that some people suggested the federal government should not institute a value added tax or a national sales tax without a referendum in the country. It did not seem to bother the provincial Liberal government to increase our retail sales tax from seven to eight per cent, which as I have said is a 15 per cent increase.

I could read to the minister all the nice things that were said about the Treasurer's budget by various people in the newspapers, editorial writers and special column writers. They are very revealing. They are just as appropriate today as they were back in April. One that is kind of amusing, which the minister may have memorized by now, is from the Toronto Sun, written by Lorrie Goldstein, who used to be here.

He refers to the Treasurer—I presume that is who he is referring to—as: "...a parsimonious old farmer, my foot. Treasurer Bob Nixon yesterday plowed taxpayers into the ground and then stuck it to them with a gilt-edged pitchfork. But this budget also employs the oldest political trick in the book. It sticks it to the taxpayer in the first year of a majority government in the belief that the public has a short memory. A year ago, when the Liberals had only 51 seats in a minority government, Nixon said in his pre-election budget that fiscal responsibility meant no new taxes. Yesterday, with the economy still strong and the social needs precisely the same, Nixon argued that fiscal responsibility demanded the biggest tax grab in history."

I would not expect the minister to entirely subscribe to that, but it is an interesting quote to read, especially when you are in opposition. The Treasurer would completely understand that. As I said earlier, the Treasurer's quotes were very interesting when he was on this side and he had somebody else's budget to criticize.

If the Minister of Revenue does not feel like withdrawing this one per cent increase, this increase from seven to eight per cent, it will not be too long before we will be over there and he will be reading back some of the things I said about the fine folk over there today. I guess that is politics. I do not know why we are trying to persuade the Treasurer that the tax should stay at seven per cent, because the way he is going it just makes the time much shorter before we will be back over there. I guess we are more interested in

the taxpayers than getting back over there to try to clean up all the mess this government has made.

**1640**

Here is another item, this one from the Globe and Mail. The other one was from the Toronto Sun. The Globe and Mail has always been a very fair paper and has said it the way it saw it. Here is one by Peter Cook in the Globe and Mail of April 21, 1988.

"Here is what Ontario Treasurer Robert Nixon's \$38-billion tax-and-spend budget is bad for:

"1. It is bad for ordinary Canadians.

"2. It is bad for the cause of responsible government. There is an extraordinary quotient of either artifice or arrogance in this government's approach to fiscal management.

"3. It is bad for a stable, growing and competitive economy. Ontario will pay for this budget and not just through higher taxes."

That sort of underlines the point I was trying to make.

**Mr. Furlong:** Which expert of the paper?

**Mr. McCague:** This is Peter Cook from the Globe and Mail. I do not know the gentleman, but he is certainly right on.

Then we have an interesting one written by a chap named Garth Turner of the Toronto Sun.

**Mr. Furlong:** Oh, yes, let's talk about him.

**Mr. McCague:** Out in Halton they have heard of him.

**The Acting Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mr. McCague:** He said on April 21, 1988: "It was open season on the middle class yesterday and Bob Nixon turned out armed to the teeth. Never before has an Ontario government sucked this much money, \$1.3 billion, in a single year out of the provincial economy. Because we are being bought off with our money, Nixon outrageously plans to spend an additional 8.6 per cent this year, which is more than double the inflation rate. Add it all up and Nixon has buried his knife to the hilt. Welcome to the real Peterson years, folks."

**Mr. Faubert:** Garth doesn't like any taxes. Remind him next year.

**Mr. McCague:** Mr. Speaker, there are interjections about what Mr. Turner likes and does not like. I do not know him that well to be able to agree or disagree with the member. All I do know is that in the most recent federal election there were a lot of people who liked him and I just want to add my congratulations to all those that I



am sure he has received. I am sure the member for Scarborough-Ellesmere has already sent him a letter of congratulations.

As I said during my remarks, I believe that had the Treasurer decided, as he is now trying to figure out, that health care needed more money, as is the case in his consideration of Bill 119, where he is deciding how he wants to divvy up the lottery funds, had he decided that it was necessary to increase the sales tax from seven per cent to eight per cent and that money was going to be dedicated to health care in the province, over and above what is normally spent on health care, people would not have objected to the extent that they have. However, there is no dedication of these funds, it is obvious.

We hear from the Treasurer that he put \$850 million over five years into hospital construction. I have asked him many times if that is \$850 million more than would have gone into health construction if he flat-lined what was going into it in 1984-85. It is becoming increasingly apparent that my suspicion was right. What he did was multiply what was going into the health construction area in 1984-85 when he took over and said that over five years we were going to spend \$850 million. That is a trick, and he may not be the first Treasurer to have ever used that.

**Mr. South:** He had good teachers.

**Mr. McCague:** I am not sure about that, but by the same token, when he has been faced with the question, "Is this \$850 million you are talking about adding up what you intended to put in over five years or is it \$850 million plus \$850 million?" those members who listened will know that the Treasurer has refused consistently to answer that question. So my suspicion is that we are right and that all he simply did was flat-line it.

What I am saying to the Minister of Revenue is, had he decided to put this 15 per cent increase in retail sales tax into increases in the health care system and were it not of a customary nature, then I think the public would have bought it. It is just what many people say in editorials, in letters and in comments; it is a grab. We do not see anything coming from that; oh, we do see the odd thing. Ministers' staffs have almost doubled since the government took over.

**Mr. Faubert:** Is that numbers or size?

**Mr. McCague:** We have 8,000 or 9,000 more civil servants. I took a lot of pride, in almost seven years when I was Chairman of Management Board, in a job that I was given by the government of the day: that was to cut the civil service by a percentage that reflected the constraints which we were under in those times.

**Mr. Faubert:** Who did you fire?

**Mr. McCague:** We did not fire. Attrition takes care of a lot of that.

**Mr. Faubert:** That doesn't take care of anything.

**Mr. McCague:** Oh, yes, it does.

**Mr. Faubert:** You weren't supplying much-needed services.

**Mr. McCague:** We were doing a lot more. The honourable member says that if you do it by attrition, that is not doing anything. I would like to know what the hell it is he is doing when he is going up 7,000 or 8,000. If I was doing nothing, what he is doing is nonsense.

**The Acting Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mr. McCague:** As I was saying, I took great pride in getting those numbers down by about 8,000 over a period of six to seven years.

**The Acting Speaker:** Could the honourable member please address his remarks through the chair, and not in a manner which invites interjection on the other side, and could the government side terminate the interjections?

**Mr. McCague:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am glad to see you are going to be a very stern Speaker. I do not mind at all being called to order, which you have done, as long as the people on the other side are asked to do the same.

**Mr. Epp:** George, you even phased out your own job.

**Mr. McCague:** Which?

**Mr. Epp:** You even phased out your own position.

**The Acting Speaker:** Through the chair, please.

**Mr. McCague:** However, as I was saying, it is not apparent to the taxpayer or to us on the opposition benches that in fact the government needed this money, this one per cent increase—from seven to eight, I want to keep saying—in sales tax, because we are not seeing any results for it. I was explaining, Mr. Speaker, when you felt obliged to bring me to order, that it was going to some things that we on this side of the House are not very happy about: the increase of almost 10 per cent in the number of civil servants, the increase of 30, 40, 50 per cent in the minister's personal staff. We cannot find out what the real facts are as to how many those are. These are the kinds of things the money is being spent on and we object strenuously.

I would not say for a moment that the government is dishonest, or whatever, about where this money is being spent. What I would



say, though, is that it is very difficult for opposition parties to find out what they are doing about it. We ask questions in the House; vague answers. We put questions on Orders and Notices; in most cases, no answers. You will have heard of the difficulty, Mr. Speaker, mentioned by my colleague the member for Simcoe East (Mr. McLean) just a few days ago about questions that have been on the Orders and Notices paper for over a year. We would like to get the information and hopefully will, either in the Treasurer's estimates or in the estimates of the Chairman of Management Board.

1650

It will be no secret to you, Mr. Speaker, that we will be obliged to oppose this bill on the basis that it is a 15 per cent increase in money raised. Why the increase was necessary has not been adequately explained. Certainly if it had been designated, as I said, to health care, I think the public would have bought it. But if the Minister of Revenue wants to assist in the demise of the Liberal Party as the government, maybe we should not be so hard on him.

**The Acting Speaker:** Are there any questions or comments arising out of the statements of the member for Simcoe West (Mr. McCague)?

**Mr. Cousens:** In listening to the member for Simcoe West, I think the House has finally had an insight into some of the problems that have been created by the government with its tax grab. I think it is one of the most responsible statements I have heard in an awfully long time from this former Chairman of Management Board who, from his extensive experience not only at the provincial level but also at the municipal level, is able to share some of these insights with us.

I think it is significant that what he is saying are key points that have not been heard in this House for some time, primarily because the government has been so late in bringing this legislation forward. I would just like to know—this is a question to the previous speaker, the member for Simcoe West—if he could comment on the timing of the implementation of this tax on the public, and number two, on the fact that they just could not wait to get their hands on our money and, therefore, almost the first thing they did when they got their majority was to levy a tax that would bring in \$1 billion for the government and hope that in four years people would forget it.

The one thing is the timing of the announcement of this increase in taxes. The honourable member's experience again, I think, exceeds that of any member who is currently in the House

right now, unless the member for Beaches-Woodbine (Ms. Bryden) has been here longer, but I am not just sure. But could the member for Simcoe West comment on having to debate this bill some six or eight months after it was brought in?

I do not think it is totally fair, ethical or right that the government would wait this long, having already gone ahead and made the people of Ontario pay the bill and now, so much later in time, having a chance to debate it. I think there is something rather wrong that this should have happened. I would appreciate it very much if the member for Simcoe West could give some comment on these remarks.

**The Acting Speaker:** Before that, are there any comments or questions arising out of the speech by the member for Simcoe West? Does the member for Simcoe West wish to respond?

**Mr. McCague:** It is interesting that only my colleague would wish to comment. The members opposite are always very quick to say things. I could pick out particular ones over there. I see some who are not in their own seats. That is maybe why they cannot speak.

However, as to what my colleague asked me to answer, I think I should follow the traditions of this House and of the government of the day and not answer any questions that are asked of me. That is the way they operate on the other side of the House. I would not want my colleague to think that if he wants something answered, he could ask me. But he is right. I am not answering his question. I am just saying he is right. It has been a pleasure to have had an opportunity to answer a few interjections and comment on Bill 122.

**The Acting Speaker:** Are there any other members who wish to participate in the debate?

**Mr. Laughren:** It would be impossible to let an increase in the sales tax go by without commenting on it. When I was thinking about the ramifications of this bill and what must be going through the Treasurer's mind, I went back and looked at the statement that the Treasurer made just about a week ago when he was talking about federal tax reform. The Treasurer said:

"My intention is to continue to study the federal changes and to listen to the advice of interested individuals and groups about the appropriateness of the reforms. Ontario's response to these changes will be guided by the need to maintain the ability of the tax system to deliver adequate revenues in a fair, competitive and simple fashion."



I thought that I would address my remarks on the sales tax bill based on those three criteria, namely, fair, competitive and simple. I do not think the Treasurer meant simple-minded. I think he meant simple to administer, and I regret very much that the Treasurer and the Minister of Revenue did not keep those three criteria in mind when they were applying their own new levels of taxes.

I think that there is general agreement among people who look at taxes in a fairly conceptual way that sales taxes are regressive taxes, and it does not really make sense for the Minister of Revenue or the Treasurer to say, "Well, that's why we have sales tax credits." It is the shallowest of all possible arguments to say that sales tax credits are there to remove the regressivity from sales tax. Not everyone gets the sales tax credits to start with, so it is regressive for everyone who does not get them.

The Toronto Star, certainly a publication not unknown to Liberals in this province, had this to say, "A sales tax is aimed at consumption. Consumption means just about everything you spend your money on, everything except savings. Guess who saves a lot? Right. Not the poor. Why would we want a tax which provides an incentive for the rich to save more?" Surely to goodness the Minister of Revenue understands that the poor are the ones who spend all their money and, therefore, everything they spend is taxed. The rich do not spend all their money, so all their earnings are not taxed.

For example, the average family spends about 38 per cent of its income on basic food, shelter and clothing. The rich spend a lower proportion. But families whose incomes are less than half of the average income, those below the poverty line, in other words, spend at least 58 per cent of their income on these same basics, and often much more. Imposing taxes on these basics would hit low-income people harder than others and, in effect, would increase the level of real poverty in the country.

It should be clear to a government that used to be reform-minded, when it had to be, of course, that it is not possible to have a progressive sales tax. For this government to be increasingly dependent on it simply does not make sense.

If I could quote from someone else—

**Mr. Faubert:** Unsigned.

**Mr. Laughren:** No, this is from Havi Echenberg, who is executive director of the National Anti-Poverty Organization, an organization that members opposite might feel uncomfortable hearing from. Nevertheless, they have a

legitimate voice and they should be heard. She said: "Since the poor have no option but to spend all of their income, the regressivity of the sales tax is doubled. The poor have to spend everything. Let's have the people who can afford to pay pay."

Once again we have people who understand the spending habits of people in our society concluding that sales tax is the most regressive, and the sales tax credits are simply a ruse to fool people into thinking that we do have a sales tax, but is not as regressive as it would be if we did not have these sales tax credits.

First of all, I think that all members would agree that if you just had a straight sales tax, it would be very regressive if you did not have the sales tax credits. Therefore, they argue the sales tax credit makes it a little more acceptable. Well, not in our books, it does not. It is still a regressive tax and is not necessary in a society as rich as the one we have here in Ontario.

**1700**

The Treasurer knows that. He has been around long enough to understand that. When he was asked by a reporter from the Toronto Star if he thought that the proposed federal sales tax increases would hit lower- and middle-income earners the hardest, the Treasurer said, "You might make your own conclusions."

Why would the Treasurer, when he is talking about the federal sales tax not say: "Yes, that is exactly what it is going to do. It is going to hit the middle-income earner the hardest." I can tell the House why he would not say that, because he is in the middle of proposing his own sales tax increase. If anybody has ever been an accomplice to the national sales tax program, it is the Treasurer of this province.

First, he put this one per cent increase on everything, so that when a federal sales tax does come in, he attaches himself to it and gets a higher percentage than he would have a year ago. Talk about talking out of both sides of your mouth. That is exactly what this Treasurer is doing and, by association, the Minister of Revenue is just as guilty. What he has really done is take the easy way out in increasing his revenues.

As a matter of fact, it was strange when they asked Don Blenkarn about the tax increases. He said "This sort of change"—talking about a new national sales tax—"can only be undertaken by a government with a majority since it will have to ride roughshod over an enraged populace when the details of the scheme are understood."



If that is what this majority wants to associate itself with—that kind of majority with that kind of attitude towards raising taxes—I suppose that is its right to do so, but it is a long way from the reforming Liberal Party that people thought they were electing in 1987, because that truly is a regressive way of raising revenues.

This party has always said that governments need revenues in order to deliver the programs. We are up here every day demanding that there be proper funding for various programs and we understand that, but we have never backed away from where the new revenues should come from.

We have often given examples. Every budget, we lay out before the Treasurer where we think the new revenues should be raised in order to deliver the programs that we all demand. It is not a case of pretending that we want programs and we do not want to have to pay for them. We understand that, but there are fairer ways of raising revenues in this province and this government simply does not seem to understand that. They continue to raise the most regressive taxes.

As a matter of fact, it was one of the oddities of the recent federal election that we went through the entire election and dwelt very little on the federal government's new tax reform proposals. I regret that. The whole election became polarized around the free trade question, which is important and I am not minimizing that, but it does seem sad that this government was elected with a majority without ever having to detail its tax reform proposals to the electorate.

I think that the electorate will regret that. I do not think that the government will regret it. They will simply say that they had already detailed what their tax reform proposals were and that therefore they now have a mandate to proceed with them. I suppose technically they do, but I still regret very much what the federal government is doing with these new sales tax proposals.

We had examples of the Minister of Finance and the Prime Minister contradicting the chairman of the finance committee, Mr. Blenkarn, on how much new revenue would be raised by the new federal sales tax proposals. I do not mind telling the House whom I believed in that whole debate. It certainly was not Mr. Wilson or Mr. Mulroney.

**Mr. Cousens:** A lot of other people did, though.

**Mr. Laughren:** Yes, they did believe them, but perhaps you were not listening to what I said.

**Mr. Cousens:** You saw that on Monday night.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mr. Laughren:** I do not trust Brian Mulroney to do anything but impose ever more regressive taxes on ordinary Canadians. I will tell you it will be the middle-income earners and the low-income earners that take the brunt of the Tory tax proposals at the federal level. Mark my words.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member for Nickel Belt will address his remarks through the Speaker.

**Mr. Cousens:** He's all mixed up, isn't he?

**Mr. Laughren:** I understand the member for Markham (Mr. Cousens) does not give a sweet hoot about low- and middle-income earners.

**Mr. Cousens:** No, that is wrong and you know it.

**Mr. Laughren:** It is not wrong—

**Mr. Cousens:** That's just a slanderous slur. Come on. That's not right at all.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mr. Laughren:** —or he would not even be in the caucus he is in and he would not be supporting his federal party.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. The member for Nickel Belt has the floor and he will address his remarks through the Speaker.

**Mr. Laughren:** I will try, Mr. Speaker.

The Treasurer of Ontario says very strange things when he talks about the sales tax. He says: "We think sales tax is a fair tax, it's up front, it's democratic and people know where it comes from. Believe me, people know where it comes from," said the Treasurer, who had been criticized for raising Ontario sales tax one point to eight per cent.

Because it is visible and because people know who has done it to them, what has that got to do with fairness? It is totally irrelevant. Yet there he is pretending that because he said that, that somehow makes it fair because it is up front. It has nothing to do with fairness; absolutely nothing at all. The Treasurer is simply playing with words.

We all understand that this government has made some commitments to increasing certain services in the province and that it is still having difficulty funding a lot of them and needs revenues. That is not the issue. The issue is where it is going to get the new moneys.

The standing committee on finance and economic affairs had this to say in recommendation 22: "Separate hearings should be held on tax reform in order to undertake a comprehensive study of the tax system, including the issue of developing a more progressive tax base."



What is happening with that? Why would the government proceed with this increase in the sales tax while ignoring that recommendation? If the government had those separate hearings in order to investigate the possibility of a broader, more progressive tax base, and that committee concluded that this was the way to go, then the government would have an argument on its side.

But when the government has not done that, when it simply goes ahead and imposes the eight per cent, it makes a mockery of the standing committee's recommendations. I just do not know how long this government expects to have committees grind out the work day after day, even when the House is not in session, and then have the government ignore their recommendations.

The committee said: "Doubts were also expressed that in doing so, the province would be supporting a tax system that was less progressive than it would wish"—in other words, in supporting the federal scheme. "In this case, a progressive system based on ability to pay was deemed to be of more importance than simplification and efficiency."

I hope the Minister of Revenue heard that: "A progressive system based on ability to pay was deemed to be of more importance than simplification and efficiency." I have a very strong suspicion that when the time came to look for new revenues they thought, "What is simple and what is efficient?" in terms of collecting the revenues; not what is fair, or we would not be staring this sales tax increase in the face. For those reasons the government proceeded: not because it was the right thing to do but because it was the easy thing to do.

**Mr. Cousens:** Well, they had the power.

**Mr. Laughren:** Yes, they had the power to do it, just like the federal government is going to have the power to impose its national sales tax.

I said earlier that the Treasurer had talked about how the sales tax was so visible and that made it fair somehow. I still do not know how he came to that conclusion. I am trying to think of the link between being visible and being fair. At some point the Treasurer, I hope, will explain what he meant by that.

When he was being pursued about the national sales tax, he said: "It is hard for me to find anybody now who does not approve of raising money for this purpose as long as it is allocated to the programs of the province in a fair and judicious way." What the Treasurer is saying is that nobody really objects to an increase in the sales tax as long as the moneys that are raised are

spent in a fair and judicious way. I do not think the Treasurer has been listening to anybody except his friends in his own caucus, and perhaps the Tories, because there are all sorts of—

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**Mr. Cousens:** Don't keep saying that.

**Mr. Laughren:** The Tories have never objected to sales tax, ever. It is in complete keeping with their philosophy—

**An hon. member:** What did Frank Miller do a few years ago?

**Hon. Mr. Grandmaitre:** Leslie Frost started it in 1961.

**Mr. Epp:** Three percent and they called it the Frost-bite.

Interjections.

**Mr. Philip:** Mr. Speaker, I think the one Tory left in the House is creating a tremendous disruption; maybe he should be asked to leave.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. One member at a time.

**Mr. Laughren:** I do recall that when Frank Miller expanded the tax base and brought in a lot of additional items to be taxed, nobody was more incensed than the Liberals.

As a matter of fact, in May of that year, the Liberals rang the bells for three days in protest against the first reading of the sales tax bill which increased the base. It did not increase revenues by almost \$1 billion, which this bill is going to do. I do not see any Liberals walking out now. But in those days, they pretended it was a highly principled position. I have some quotes here from the opposition critic of the day who happens to be the Treasurer of this day.

In those days, it was a highly principled position to take, but now in government, of course it is different.

**Mr. South:** Times change.

**Mr. Laughren:** Principles go down the tube is what happens, I say to the member for Frontenac-Addington (Mr. South). That is exactly what happened in this case, because one year the Liberals are screaming that sales taxes are unfair, and the next year they are increasing them by one percentage point as well.

We do not like the way the sales taxes are being imposed. Before I get on to that, I wanted to quote the Treasurer. As a matter of fact, I will not even quote the Treasurer; I will quote the Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Curling:** You fellows are so right that nobody voted for you.



**Mr. Laughren:** They will.

**Mr. Faubert:** They did not last week.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mr. Laughren:** If I could quote from the present Premier, who was then not the Premier but leader of his party. He said in 1982: "What we saw in that budget was a change in the philosophy of taxation. We saw a move away from the progressive system which we, as Liberals, believe in passionately, taxation that is based on the ability to pay, and saw a major move toward flat consumption and regressive taxes. We saw a shift on to the poor, the lower income families who have less capacity to deal with these taxes than people at higher income scales. As a party we chose, as a rather dramatic signal of our displeasure, not to show up to vote for a couple of days."

That was in opposition to increased sales taxes. And now we have the Premier putting his stamp of approval on this sales tax increase. I suppose nobody has ever accused a Liberal of consistency, and certainly this government is no different, no different at all.

I see some of my learned friends here who will appreciate a quote from John Stuart Mill this afternoon. He said a very pithy thing. He said, "Equality in taxation means equality of sacrifice." If you think of what that means, then surely you will conclude that this sales tax bill is not worthy of your support, because nobody ever pretended that sales tax means equality of sacrifice. It definitely does not. So, if you believe in the progressive tax system and equality of sacrifice, then you cannot support a retail sales tax.

If, on the other hand, you have decided that ease of collection and efficiency is more important than having an equitable tax system, then I urge you all to support this bill. If what you are really after is to get your grubby hands on more of the middle- and low-income taxpayers' money, go right ahead and vote for this bill, because that is exactly what it does. But they have thrown out the window any pretence at equality in our taxation system in the province of Ontario, and it will be remembered.

This is not the only province where sales taxes are being levied at, I think, an unfair rate. We know that Canada as a whole has become overly dependent on sales taxes as a major source of government revenue. Whereas nearly 35 per cent of major revenues come from sales taxes in Canada—that includes the provinces—the comparable figure is only 17 per cent in the United States and 26 per cent for Organization for

Economic Co-operation and Development countries.

Here we have a case of some countries that, generally speaking, are not traditionally viewed as being as progressive as Canada, such as the US, collecting only 17 per cent of their revenue from sales taxes. In Canada it is twice that, at 35 per cent. In the OECD European countries it is 26 per cent, whereas it is 35 per cent here. It is a disquieting trend to see our ever increasing reliance on the regressive sales taxes.

One of the criteria on which the Treasurer said he wished to base any kind of reaction to the federal government was simplicity. Simple for whom? Whom was he thinking about when he talked about collecting taxes? I would like to quote once again from the standing committee on finance and economic affairs. They said:

"We are concerned that the provincial government is falling into a tax, tax, tax, spend, spend, spend approach to financial management which could undermine the province's fiscal position in the near term and surely will undermine it in the long term."

In April of this year, the business editor of the Toronto Sun said: "Unable to control spending and make some tough decisions, they wimp out and just go back to robbing those who are least organized and too polite to bitch. That is us, the middle, the people with the fewest means of avoiding taxation and those who least feed from the palm of the government."

People are becoming increasingly aware that this government has lost its zeal for any kind of reform measures when it comes to taxation. It is just a simple case of getting their hands on ever more money. We are not opposed to having a more simplified tax system, but if you can only do it through regressivity, then we are opposed to it.

Sales taxes are easy to raise. One little number, one little bit and the first thing you know the amount of sales tax being collected by the government in Ontario is up by 14 per cent. By going from seven per cent to eight per cent, that means an increase of over 14 per cent. Surely there are other ways of raising that money, and we have laid out those ways to the Treasurer on many occasions.

The concern we have about the sales tax is not simply what it does today, but what the potential is in the future for sales taxes. It is so simple to simply ratchet up the sales tax another point at any given time, such as we are facing right now. There are no controls over that. A majority



government simply does it and gets its huge new revenues.

As the *Toronto Star* says, "This tax is a mammoth money machine that could be turned on whenever the government wanted to increase its take." Of course, that is exactly what they have done. They also go on to say, just about three weeks ago:

"There is still another reason why many Canadians worry about the sales tax. While six per cent on most goods and services might be equivalent to 12 per cent on a smaller base, an extra few percentage points can turn into a multibillion-dollar tax grab when it is applied to almost every good and service that people buy. And access to that kind of money machine would be a great temptation for a cash-starved government."

They are talking about the federal sales tax, but every comment about the federal sales tax can be applied to the provincial sales tax as well, because it really is the same principle.

1720

I fear very much that the Treasurer and the Premier are falling into that temptation just to crank up the old tax grab machine that is there whenever they need new revenues, without going through any kind of arduous process to see where the loopholes are, to see if there are new ways of raising moneys that are more progressive, to see what way in which the whole system needs to be reformed.

We know that all sorts of reforms could be made, but does the Treasurer tackle those? No. In his budget last year, what was radically new or even reform-minded about his budget? Nothing. He did not work hard at bringing in a budget. He simply ratcheted up a few tax points and that was it—no attempt to really change the tax system in this province. I do not think that is what the people expect from a Liberal government, but that is what they are getting.

I cannot speak on this bill without referring to what has happened federally and what I fear will happen provincially as well. Since 1984, when the Tories were first elected, the sources of revenue went up as follows. Consumption taxes are up 46 per cent—that is in four years—personal income taxes are up 31 per cent and corporate income taxes are down eight per cent. Here we have a case where the federal Tories raised consumption taxes 46 per cent and personal income taxes 31 per cent and corporate taxes are down eight per cent. That is some kind of tax reform, is it not? I do not think the Canadian people have seen anything yet, now that the

federal Tories have their new majority. I fear that trend is also present at the provincial level. I can only try to sound warning bells, because the government has its majority here as well.

As a matter of fact, I was reading Rosemary Speirs's article of October 3, in which she said: "Nixon was interested from the beginning"—she is talking about the federal sales tax—"Although he balked...at the idea of such a large federal intrusion into the sales tax field (traditionally provincial), he couldn't help but be attracted by the idea of getting someone else to collect his taxes."

"Ontario's eight per cent sales tax would disappear and be folded into the national tax. Ottawa would collect all the sales taxes for all the provinces. And, Nixon would hope, taxpayers who were angry when he raised the sales tax now would blame the federal government."

I think that is not a luxury the Treasurer is going to have, because if the Treasurer joins in with the federal government on its new sales tax proposals, he will be as guilty as Michael Wilson for that program. There is absolutely no reason why this Treasurer and the Premier, or the Minister of Revenue, should go along with the federal government's national sales tax proposals. They are being had.

I know he thinks it is easy. He thinks it is an easy way out to just join in and let them collect the tax.

**Hon. Mr. Grandmaître:** No.

**Mr. Laughren:** Oh, yes. Why else has he gone up one per cent? So he will get a bigger chunk of what the federal government collects. That is exactly why he has done it.

**Hon. Mr. Grandmaître:** To give it back to the people.

**Mr. Laughren:** We will see. I have not heard a denial yet from the Premier or the Treasurer on the national sales tax proposal and Ontario's intentions about joining it. I would like to hear the Minister of Revenue when he responds. I would like to hear him stand in his place and say categorically, "This province will not co-operate with a national sales tax program." I want him to say that. I want to hear him say that. It would be nice if he also said that he has reconsidered this bill too and that he is prepared to withdraw it, because the Treasurer is quoted as saying that he is not opposed to the idea in principle of the national sales tax.

In principle, he is not opposed to it. I do not know how any Liberal—maybe I am thinking small l-liberal. No small-l liberal could possibly be in favour of that sales tax. I know they are



big-L Liberals on that side and that does change things. They are big-L Liberals and small-c conservatives. That is what they are.

When you think about it, for the Treasurer to say he is not opposed to it in principle is a bit startling, because it is that very principle that he should be opposed to as a Liberal. He should be opposed to that principle of a sales tax which is nothing more than a huge tax grab.

I can remember when Don Blenkarn said that the new revenues that would flow into the national Treasury as a result of the sales tax proposals would be \$10 billion, he was jumped on all over by his Minister of Finance and the Prime Minister, who said, "No, no, it is revenue neutral; it is revenue neutral." If the members believe that the federal Tories are going to do anything that is revenue neutral, I hope they explain it to me and explain to me why they would do it. To make it more progressive? You have to be kidding. With the federal Tories?

Then, of course, the Treasurer jumps on the bandwagon and says, "No, no, it is not revenue neutral; no, no, it is not \$10 billion extra. It is \$14 billion extra," according to the Treasurer. It seems to me that whether it is \$10 billion or \$14 billion, or even if it is revenue neutral, it is unfair. It is not an equitable tax regime that has been developed by the federal government. For this government to even talk about going along with it is ridiculous.

I am really anxious to hear the Minister of Revenue say, since he is the minister of the day on this bill, that he is not interested in co-operating with the federal government on its new national sales tax program because what we are going to witness is a national tax added on to this to make one glorious, huge national sales tax on all sorts of goods and services. People will be paying—the estimate that is being bandied about is up to 17 per cent sales tax in Ontario; 17 per cent sales tax that we would have here. Start adding that on to the price of a house, not to mention all other products as well.

In case the members opposite were wondering, I am opposed to this bill and intend to vote against it. We intend to try to hold the Treasurer to his promise. I remind the members what he said: "Many concerns have been expressed about the possible impact of a new broad-based sales tax on low-income Canadians. This government will not enter into an agreement on a new national sales tax unless we are provided the flexibility to ensure its fair application for low-income individuals and families through a system of tax credits or exemptions."

What the Treasurer is saying in that quote is that he will only go into the national sales tax program if there are sales tax credits attached to it. That is really what he is saying. The Minister of Revenue is shaking his head. I will say it again: "This government will not enter into an agreement on a new national sales tax unless we are provided the flexibility to ensure its fair application for low-income individuals and families through a system of tax credits or exemptions." That is what he is saying. He is not denying the fact that this government would join in with the federal government in its new federal sales tax proposals. He is saying, "If we do go in, we want to make sure there are tax credits or exemptions attached to it." What I am saying to the Minister of Revenue is: That is not good enough.

A sales tax is, by definition, regressive because poor people spend all of their income. People with high incomes do not spend all their income. Therefore, poor people pay a sales tax on everything; virtually all of their income. They pay a sales tax because they spend it all. They have no choice. People in a much higher income bracket can save all sorts of money and put it into tax-saving—they can put it into tax dodges as well and pay no sales tax on whatever they do not spent on consumer goods. The minister should know that, for heaven's sake. I do not know why he is being so obtuse.

**Mr. Faubert:** Where did you learn that one?

**Mr. Laughren:** Well, the Minister of Labour (Mr. Sorbara) has been known to accuse others of being obtuse.

With those few comments, I will take my place, but I do want to hear the Minister of Revenue categorically deny that his government will take part in a national sales tax program.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Questions and comments?

1730

**Mr. South:** I would like to make a few observations and first say that I am very inexperienced and do not have too much knowledge in regard to tax, other than being a taxpayer. My education has been enlarged significantly by being in this House, even learning about the term "regressive tax"; that is intriguing.

Some of the members opposite speak in terms of absolutes. I am an engineer. I have learned a few things in engineering. There are not too many absolutes. There are a couple of them, maybe, that I would to express to you from an



engineering point of view: You cannot push a rope, and water runs downhill. Those are things I learned in engineering.

With regard to tax, the member for Nickel Belt (Mr. Laughren) says sales tax is absolutely regressive and is absolutely unfair. I would ask him to pause to think that there are a lot of entrepreneurs in our economy who are completely unknown to the income tax man. They are making a lot of money. We see them out on Yonge Street and on Bloor Street. They are not the only ones. I am sure the income tax man gets none of their income.

I tell members that it is a truth I think I believe in: The higher you put income tax, the more of the economy you drive underground. Those people then make no contribution to the tax system when it is solely based on income and the so-called ability to pay.

There is no absolute to the so-called regressive sales tax. There is a certain fairness.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member's time is up. Do other members wish to make comments or ask questions? Does the member wish to respond?

**Mr. Laughren:** I am not buying the argument of the member for Frontenac-Addington about absolutes. I can see a couple of absolute zeros right from where I am standing right now. To be fair to the member, I did appreciate his comments. I am not quarrelling with his assertion that there are all sorts of people out there who are making money and not paying taxes. I agree with that. But I think the route for those people is through the tightening up of the income tax system, not through an increase in the sales tax.

I do not know whether those people he is talking about who sell their goods on Yonge Street are collecting sales tax and turning it over to the government. I do not know that. I would not want to get into a debate on all the goods that are sold on Yonge Street and whether or not they should be taxed.

I do know that I was waiting patiently for the Minister of Revenue to rise in his place in response to my request that he categorically reject any kind of co-operation with the federal government vis-à-vis its sales tax program. I did not get that, so I can assume the Minister of Revenue is not prepared to stand in his place and tell us that he wants no part of the national sales tax program. If he fails to do that, then I suppose we have to assume he is prepared to go ahead and join that most regressive of all regimes, the sale tax regime as imposed by the most regressive of all governments, the federal Tories.

**Mr. Philip:** I would like to start off by reminding people of the words of my colleague the member for Algoma (Mr. Wildman), who on June 21, 1982, dealing with the sales tax increase at that time, described that bill in this way, "I oppose this bill for the obvious reason that it is the epitome of Tory tax philosophy." That was about the sales tax increase when it was much lower than what the Liberal government wants to do with this one. He said, "The philosophy, as shown in this bill, is to tax the little guy and to let the big shots off. It is a ripoff."

"This bill implements a budgetary policy of the Treasurer which basically means that the ordinary families of Ontario will be paying more for goods and services that they require and the corporate sector will have an even greater opportunity to avail itself of grants and whatever this government is providing for the corporate sector without paying its fair share."

He went on to say, "This is a regressive form of taxation," and dealt with the whole concept of what sales tax does to ordinary people.

Those sentiments about sales tax were not only shared by the member for Algoma. Indeed, the member for Windsor-Sandwich (Mr. Wrye), who is now a member of this government, said in dealing with sales tax increases, "Mr. Speaker, I want to start off by saying I think the bill we are considering tonight...is the real outrage." Remember, that was a bill that was raising sales tax to a level lower than what this government is now doing.

He was a little less moderate than the member for Algoma was in his attack on the whole concept of sales tax. The member for Windsor-Sandwich said it was a real outrage and went on to say, "...the most outrageous part of this Retail Sales Tax Act is that it in no way shows any understanding of those communities which are being harder hit than others."

He then went on to explain the differences in this province, the differences in the poverty levels and the differences in how some communities are worse off than others, and he argued that sales tax merely perpetuates these differences. That was the member for Windsor-Sandwich arguing in opposition, in 1982, to sales tax increases at that time.

What does this bill do? The main principle of the bill is found, I believe, in section 2. The provisions of this simply raise the tax to eight per cent on the purchase of tangible personal property and on taxable services other than transient accommodation, so the main purpose of this bill is to raise the sales tax by one percentage



point, from seven to eight per cent. On a full-year basis, this will increase government revenues by an estimated \$986 million, by far the largest single tax increase in recent memory.

Because I was a member of the House at that time, I recall when the Liberals walked out of this House in 1982 and let the bells ring for four days because they were so outraged, at a time when the member for Windsor-Sandwich was talking about a much more modest tax increase of this kind as an outrage. They walked out when the Tories broadened the retail sales tax by bringing in an extra \$350 million using this method; \$350 million then was an outrage that caused the Liberals to walk out of this House and keep those bells ringing for four days, compared to \$986 million today.

My, what a difference we have in a few years. What a difference between the kinds of platitudes, the kinds of statements the Liberals made while in opposition and what they now say when they are the government. Of course, the Treasurer's rationalization is interesting. On April 25, he gave his rationalization for the sales tax—of course, he had claimed in the newspapers it was a fair form of taxation; notice the difference: In opposition it was an outrage, and now in government it is a fair form of taxation. His rationalization was that five provinces had higher sales taxes than we did.

That is a great rationalization. We have a rationalization that somehow the Grant Devines of this world, the ultra right-wing Tories are even harder on the poor than we Liberals here in Ontario are on our people, in this very rich province, a province that has so much more that we could use to enact a progressive tax.

**1740**

If I may take the members back to those days in 1982, when the then honourable Mr. Ashe, who is no longer around—the taxpayers, I guess, caught up with him—introduced this tax. He said: "The tax base to which retail sales tax is applied has been significantly altered through the withdrawal of a number of exemptions of tax and by changing the composition of other exemptions. In addition, the tax will now apply to insulation, to repair and maintenance, labour performed on articles which are not or will not become part of real property."

Well, my goodness, were the Liberals ever incensed by that. If there was anything that caused self-righteous outcry, it was from the Liberal Party, which argued that at that time we were committing an environmental catastrophe. What were we doing? We were taxing insulation.

We were taxing the very things that were needed to encourage conservation and to clean up our environment.

Now in government, of course they not only have not reduced these, as they said they would have done and indeed as they moved a motion to do at that time, but they are increasing them even more. The Conservatives were absolutely environmentally irresponsible, according to the Liberals, in 1982, when they introduced their sales tax increase, but somehow the Treasurer says the sales tax is a fair tax now and is acceptable and nobody mentions the environment.

I notice that the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley) has not participated in this debate, at least to my knowledge. As the Minister of the Environment, he would surely be interested in this and perhaps in moving some of the very amendments that were moved by his colleagues and him in 1982.

The Treasurer, as I said, says this is a fairer tax, but that is not the conclusion the National Council of Welfare has come to. In a paper it turned out in June 1987, the government of Canada's National Council of Welfare talks about sales tax. They say, "Sales and excise taxes are regressive, which means that they put their heaviest burden on the poor and take least in percentage terms from the rich."

It says: "Families with earnings of \$5,000 pay an estimated \$980 or 14.4 per cent of their income in the form of federal sales and excise tax and duties in contrast to only 4.4 per cent of those at the exclusive \$100,000 level. The higher the income, the lower the bite of commodity taxes. The federal sales and excise tax increases detailed above have hurt the poorest the most."

It goes on then to give several examples of what happens to families in different income brackets when we see what happens using a sales tax increase, as distinct from a more progressive form of taxation. That is what the government of Canada's National Council of Welfare thinks about sales tax as a form of taxation.

If we go on, there is an interesting article in *Business Today* that deals with the same problem, and it says, "The problem is that it is extremely regressive." Here they are talking about business transfer tax, which is essentially the same problem we are talking about. "Pensioners, the poor and low-income Canadians will pay the same for the basic necessities of life as the wealthy."

What do the Liberals say about that? John Turner says: "During the last four years,



middle-income families have been gouged by the Mulroney government. Now the Conservatives want to inflict Canadians with the most massive consumption tax in the history of our nation. A Liberal government would not implement this new sales tax which hits the middle class."

Well, he is wrong. A Liberal government would implement that kind of tax. They are implementing it here. They are implementing it in this chamber in Ontario. Indeed, when the Minister of Revenue was challenged by my colleague earlier today to get up and say, "We will not associate ourselves, we will not piggy-back on the federal government's plan for a tax gouge on the middle- and low-income earners," he refused to get up and dissociate himself from that.

Of course, that is what the Treasurer did; the Treasurer refused. As reported in the November 3 issue of the *Toronto Star*, the Treasurer said:

"Nixon estimated that the tax proposed by federal Finance minister Michael Wilson would net Ottawa an extra \$14 billion in revenue and double the amount raised by the current 12 per cent federal manufacturing tax. But Nixon also talked about the pros and cons of the national sales tax proposed by the federal Progressive Conservatives and has not taken a definite position. If he were to take a clear position in favour, he would be in opposition to federal Liberal leader John Turner, who says that he wants the tax plan scrapped."

What we have is a political game where the government today has a bill that is clearly a way of hitchhiking on the regressive policies of the Mulroney-Wilson regime and refuses to dissociate itself from it before an election but really is associating itself in this bill. That is what is happening. They do not want to be seen as being contradictory to John Turner before an election, but they have legislation that is clearly in the same direction.

What have people said about sales tax in the past? Let me quote from one person I am sure members will be aware of, a person who gave a very eloquent speech on July 7, 1982: the now Premier. In talking about sales tax as a form of taxation, here are some of the kinds of things he said:

"We saw a shift"—this is the sales tax increase, remember—"on to the poor, the low-income families who have less capacity to deal with these taxes than people at higher income scales. I suspect to people at higher income levels a lot of these taxes are a nuisance, but a large sector of society today, an already beleaguered popula-

tion, will be adversely affected. Mr. Speaker, in your capacity as a constituency politician, which ultimately all of us including the Premier"—and the Premier he was talking about at that time was Mr. Davis, not himself—"are, you will know literally thousands of individual families who are adversely affected by this unfair budget."

I do not see him in the House here saying that they are going to be adversely affected by building on that increased burden. Here we have a tax system which was so objectionable in 1982 that he rang the bells for four days and he said that all these poor people were going to be affected. Now, he wants to increase that very sales tax, that very same system.

Indeed, he went on to say that they would be moving an amendment which would have massive exemptions. Where are the massive exemptions? The number of exemptions that he listed—he listed a number and I do not want to list them here: energy conservation, alternative energy devices, labour and the passing of taxation on to municipalities and school boards—where are these exemptions? Where is the position of the Premier now that he had in 1982? Why is he so silent, not just in his absence today but in his absence in this legislation? Why are the views that he held so firmly in 1982 so sadly missing as he goes contrary to this?

We, of course, can expect that kind of thing. This is the same Premier who said that he was firmly opposed to Sunday shopping during the election and then introduced Sunday shopping legislation after the election. This is the Premier who said that he would veto free trade and then introduced free trade legislation in the trucking industry. This is the same Premier who has said so many things before the election and then has made a flip-flop.

But this is not something to be taken lightly, because these are things which he has used such strong adjectives on that one would have thought that such a change of heart would be, indeed, blasphemous to the Liberal Party and, indeed, so objectionable to the Premier that he would have to look at himself in the mirror and call himself the very names that he was calling the Tories when they did the same thing in 1982.

Instead, the Treasurer says this is a fair form of taxation. What balderdash. If it was blatantly unfair in 1982, if it was so bad in 1982 that they all had to walk out of the House and ring the bells, then why is it that it is okay today?

**1750**

I think that in 1982 the present Premier summarized very well the then same policies of



the Tory government that he is now implementing today in this bill. He said—and in case some members think this is so extreme I am making it up, I encourage them to look at page 3574 in Hansard of 1982—“There is no integrity of fiscal policy or fiscal philosophy. The only integrity demonstrated is an integrity to get themselves elected.”

That is fairly clear and that is what this is—an attempt by this Liberal government to blame the Conservatives and to get a large tax grab through the back door by attaching themselves on to the very regressive policies of the former Conservative government and, indeed, by implementing the exact policies that the Conservative government introduced in 1982 and which these people were so adamantly opposed to.

I guess I have to ask, if these policies were so wrong in 1982, why are they so right today? Why did the present House leader walk out of this House and ring the bells for four days in 1982—

**Hon. Mr. Conway:** I didn't.

**Mr. Philip:** Oh; was he not elected in 1982?

**Hon. Mr. Conway:** I was in Hong Kong.

**Mr. Philip:** I am sorry. I know that if he had not been in Hong Kong at that time—and I am sure he was promoting the interest of the taxpayers, because I know members of this House who travel to different countries always promote the interest of this province—

**Hon. Mr. Conway:** For your information, it was one of those pay-your-own-way trips.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mr. Philip:** Being a single man, I am sure he is able to pay his own way, but I am sure that had he been here he would have been as outraged as the present Premier was about the increase in the sales tax. He would have been as outraged as the present Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations (Mr. Wrye) was. He probably would have wanted to walk out. Even though he personally objects to bell-ringing, he would have walked out with the crew and let the bells ring for four days.

But now it is a fair tax. What a difference a few years make.

I say this is simply a regressive form of taxation. It is as regressive a form of taxation to the municipalities, to the poor and to the middle-class people as it was in 1982. Indeed, I think it may encourage what the Premier was afraid of.

In 1982, the Premier—I am trying to find the quote. I will paraphrase him, if necessary, because it deals with an issue raised by my

colleague in the Liberal Party in response to the member for Nickel Belt earlier.

The Premier said in 1982 that sales tax increases would basically encourage an underground type of economy. The theme there was that the only fair form of taxation was corporate and progressive income taxes and that the moment you start relying more and more on the sales tax, you in fact drive things underground. It is exactly opposite to the comments that were made by the hon member for Frontenac-Addington earlier. And it is exactly contrary to what the now Premier is saying. Indeed, I have found the quote. He says:

“But when blatantly unfair laws are brought in”—and the blatantly unfair law he is talking about is an increase of one per cent in the sales tax, remember—“a lot of people do not feel obliged to follow them and the cheating is encouraged. When cheating in tax laws is encouraged—and there are certain elements of society, certain economists who now suggest that some 10 per cent of our economy is in the so-called black economy, and that runs outside the normal tax jurisdictions—then we encourage the erosion of faith in our system. I use this retail tax law as an example of the Treasurer having contributed to a further erosion of the system.”

I say with all honesty that the Premier was right at that time. It was an erosion of the system. It is an erosion also of fairness. That is exactly the same kind of legislation he is bringing in now, except that he is compounding the error he so rightfully condemned in 1982. One has to ask where the policy of this government is, where the consistency of this government is and, indeed, where its ethics are.

**Hon. Mr. Conway:** Lest there was any confusion about the comments made by my friend the member for Etobicoke-Rexdale (Mr. Philip), whose interventions I always appreciate, I just want him to be clear, and I want the record to be clear, that the trip to which he made reference—the trip that came out of our little conversation, was one that was entirely a matter of my own payment, my own scheduling, to the Far East some years ago.

I would not want the honourable member to be under any wrong impression that I would ever expect the taxpayers to pay my way to that part of the globe, although I am sure there might be good reason to do so. I do not mean to be facetious, but on that occasion I was away; I had nothing to do with the strategy that rang the bells for however many hours and days that the honourable member referred to.

**Mr. Philip:** I appreciate the intervention from my colleague the Minister of Mines. I know that had he been here in 1982 instead of in Hong Kong or China or wherever at his own expense—this sales tax policy I am sure was not something he found or discovered in China—he would have been as outraged as the present Premier was and we would have had similar statements from him that I could have quoted back.

I deeply regret that he was in China at the time because I would dearly have loved to have reminded him of the position his colleagues took from his own mouth, rather than from the mouth of the present Premier and from other cabinet ministers.

On motion by Mr. Philip, the debate was adjourned.

#### BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

**Hon. Mr. Conway:** I would like to indicate the business of the House for most of next week.

On Monday, November 28, we will continue with the estimates of the Ministry of Health.

On Tuesday and Wednesday of next week, we will deal with the tax bills or the revenue bills, beginning on Tuesday with the adjourned debate on second reading of Bill 122. Expecting that to conclude, we will move on to second reading of Bill 121, An Act to amend the Gasoline Tax Act. Expecting that perhaps to be concluded, at least at the second reading stage, we will then move on to second reading debate of Bill 120, An Act to amend the Tobacco Tax Act.

Assuming, but not guaranteeing, that we conclude the debates on those three items at the second reading stage, pursuant to an agreement this morning, we will stack the votes and take the votes—assuming we conclude—on Wednesday afternoon of next week at 5:45.

On Thursday, December 1, in the morning we will deal with private members' business standing in the names of Mr. Ballinger and Mr. Hampton. Next Thursday afternoon's business is to be decided and announced, hopefully, early next week.

The House adjourned at 5:59 p.m.



## ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS\*

(130 seats)

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**Lieutenant Governor: Hon. Lincoln M. Alexander, PC, QC**

Adams, Peter (Peterborough L)  
 Allen, Richard (Hamilton West NDP)  
 Ballinger, William G. (Durham-York L)  
 Beer, Charles (York North L)  
 Black, Kenneth H. (Muskoka-Georgian Bay L)  
 Bossy, Maurice L. (Chatham-Kent L)  
**Bradley, Hon. James J.**, Minister of the Environment (St. Catharines L)  
 Brandt, Andrew S. (Sarnia PC)  
 Breagh, Michael J. (Oshawa NDP)  
 Brown, Michael A. (Algoma-Manitoulin L)  
 Bryden, Marion (Beaches-Woodbine NDP)  
 Callahan, Robert V. (Brampton South L)  
 Campbell, Sterling (Sudbury L)  
**Caplan, Hon. Elinor**, Minister of Health (Orillia L)  
 Carrothers, Douglas A. (Oakville South L)  
 Charlton, Brian A. (Hamilton Mountain NDP)  
 Chiarelli, Robert (Ottawa West L)  
 Cleary, John C. (Cornwall L)  
 Collins, Shirley (Wentworth East L)  
**Conway, Hon. Sean G.**, Minister of Mines (Renfrew North L)  
 Cooke, David R. (Kitchener L)  
 Cooke, David S. (Windsor-Riverside NDP)  
 Cordiano, Joseph (Lawrence L)  
 Cousens, W. Donald (Markham PC)  
 Cunningham, Dianne E. (London North PC)  
 Cureatz, Sam L. (Durham East PC)  
**Curling, Hon. Alvin**, Minister of Skills Development (Scarborough North L)  
 Daigeler, Hans (Nepean L)  
 Dietsch, Michael M. (St. Catharines-Brock L)  
**Eakins, Hon. John F.**, Minister of Municipal Affairs (Victoria-Haliburton L)  
**Edighoffer, Hon. Hugh A.**, Speaker (Perth L)  
 Elliot, R. Walter (Halton North L)  
**Elston, Hon. Murray J.**, Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet (Bruce L)  
 Epp, Herbert A. (Waterloo North L)  
 Eves, Ernie L. (Parry Sound PC)  
 Farnan, Michael (Cambridge NDP)  
 Faubert, Frank (Scarborough-Ellesmere L)  
 Fawcett, Joan M. (Northumberland L)  
 Ferraro, Rick E. (Guelph L)  
 Fleet, David (High Park-Swansea L)

**Fontaine, Hon. René**, Minister of Northern Development (Cochrane North L)  
**Fulton, Hon. Ed**, Minister of Transportation (Scarborough East L)  
 Furlong, Allan W. (Durham Centre L)  
**Grandmaître, Hon. Bernard C.**, Minister of Revenue (Ottawa East L)  
 Grier, Ruth A. (Etobicoke-Lakeshore NDP)  
 Haggerty, Ray (Niagara South L)  
 Hampton, Howard (Rainy River NDP)  
 Harris, Michael D. (Nipissing PC)  
 Hart, Christine E. (York East L)  
 Henderson, D. James (Etobicoke-Humber L)  
**Hošek, Hon. Chaviva**, Minister of Housing (Oakwood L)  
 Jackson, Cameron (Burlington South PC)  
 Johnson, Jack (Wellington PC)  
 Johnston, Richard F. (Scarborough West NDP)  
 Kanter, Ron (St. Andrew-St. Patrick L)  
**Kerrio, Hon. Vincent G.**, Minister of Natural Resources (Niagara Falls L)  
 Keyes, Kenneth A. (Kingston and The Islands L)  
 Kormos, Peter (Welland-Thorold NDP)  
 Kozyra, Taras B. (Port Arthur L)  
**Kwinter, Hon. Monte**, Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Wilson Heights L)  
 Laughren, Floyd (Nickel Belt NDP)  
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 Leone, Laureano (Downsview L)  
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 Mahoney, Steven W. (Mississauga West L)  
**Mancini, Hon. Remo**, Minister without Portfolio (Essex South L)  
 Marland, Margaret (Mississauga South PC)  
 Martel, Shelley (Sudbury East NDP)  
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 McCague, George R. (Simcoe West PC)  
 McClelland, Carman (Brampton North L)  
 McGuigan, James F. (Essex-Kent L)  
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**McLeod, Hon. Lyn**, Minister of Colleges and Universities (Fort William L)  
 Mclash, Frank (Kenora L)

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 Neumann, David E. (Brantford L)  
 Nicholas, Cindy (Scarborough Centre L)  
 Nixon, J. Bradford (York Mills L)  
**Nixon, Hon. Robert F.**, Deputy Premier,  
 Treasurer of Ontario and Minister of Eco-  
 nomics and Minister of Financial Institutions  
 (Brant-Haldimand L)  
**Oddie Munro, Hon. Lily**, Minister of Culture  
 and Communications (Hamilton Centre L)  
 Offer, Steven (Mississauga North L)  
**O'Neil, Hon. Hugh P.**, Minister of Tourism and  
 Recreation (Quinte L)  
 O'Neill, Yvonne (Ottawa-Rideau L)  
 Owen, Bruce (Simcoe Centre L)  
**Patten, Hon. Richard**, Minister of Government  
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 Pelissero, Harry E. (Lincoln L)  
**Peterson, Hon. David R.**, Premier and Presi-  
 dent of the Council and Minister of Inter-  
 governmental Affairs (London Centre L)  
 Philip, Ed (Etobicoke-Rexdale NDP)  
**Phillips, Hon. Gerry**, Minister of Citizenship  
 (Scarborough-Agincourt L)  
 Poirier, Jean, Deputy Speaker and Chairman of  
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 and Russell L)  
 Pollock, Jim (Hastings-Peterborough PC)  
 Polsinelli, Claudio (Yorkview L)  
 Poole, Dianne (Eglinton L)  
 Pope, Alan W. (Cochrane South PC)  
 Pouliot, Gilles (Lake Nipigon NDP)  
 Rae, Bob (York South NDP)  
**Ramsay, Hon. David**, Minister of Correctional  
 Services (Timiskaming L)  
 Ray, Michael C., Deputy Chairman of the  
 Committees of the Whole House (Windsor-  
 Walkerville L)  
 Reville, David (Riverdale NDP)  
 Reycraft, Douglas R. (Middlesex L)

**Riddell, Hon. Jack**, Minister of Agriculture and  
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 Roberts, Marietta L. D. (Elgin L)  
 Runciman, Robert W. (Leeds-Grenville PC)  
 Ruprecht, Tony (Parkdale L)  
**Scott, Hon. Ian G.**, Attorney General  
 (St. George-St. David L)  
 Smith, David W. (Lambton L)  
**Smith, Hon. E. Joan**, Solicitor General  
 (London South L)  
 Sola, John (Mississauga East L)  
**Sorbara, Hon. Gregory S.**, Minister of Labour  
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 South, Larry (Frontenac-Addington L)  
 Sterling, Norman W. (Carleton PC)  
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**Ward, Hon. Christopher C.**, Minister of  
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**Wilson, Hon. Mavis**, Minister without Portfolio  
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CANON  
XI  
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No. 111

# Hansard

## Official Report of Debates

### Legislative Assembly of Ontario

**First Session, 34th Parliament**  
Monday, November 28, 1988



Speaker: Honourable Hugh A. Edighoffer  
Clerk of the House: Claude L. DesRosiers

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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday, November 28, 1988

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayers.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### HOME CARE

**Mr. Farnan:** On May 2, 1986, four-year-old Joey Kocher was struck by a car, which resulted in severe brain damage for Joey. He will be forever confined to a wheelchair.

Joey was maintained in chronic care facilities from 1986 until his release in August 1988. Richard and Brenda Kocher were informed that Joey would be able to attend school as of January 1989. The chief of paediatrics, Dr. Biggar, at the Hugh MacMillan Medical Centre in Toronto recommended that Joey attend school in an integrated classroom environment, and the Waterloo County Board of Education is willing to accept him.

However, neither the Ministry of Community and Social Services nor the Ministry of Health will provide the funds to make this possible. Cutbacks in home care programs of the Ministry of Health are affecting education integration for Joey Kocher and many other boys and girls who require these services.

Failure to adequately fund these home care programs gives the lie to memorandum 81 and Bill 82, which guarantee every child in the province the right to an education suitable to his or her needs. Over the last four years, the home/school care program in the region of Waterloo has experienced a growth of over 300 per cent and restrictions are now being placed on the provision of services to children like Joey. In effect, it denies Joey the opportunity of reaching his full functional and cognitive potential.

### LOVESICK LAKE NATIVE WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

**Mr. Pollock:** On Saturday evening, I was privileged to attend a wild-meat dinner held in Buckhorn and sponsored by the Lovesick Lake Native Women's Association. Not only was this a very interesting and delicious dinner, but it also served as a fund-raising event for this hard-working group of ladies.

This current project is to construct their camp, situated on 247 acres of land in Peterborough county. The camp program to be offered will allow children, both native and non-native, to learn about and experience native heritage and culture. Their dream is becoming a reality, as they soon will be in operation.

The Lovesick Lake Native Women's Association has published a cookbook, known as *The Gathering*, which has become a Canadian best-seller. At this time, I should like to compliment and congratulate the association for its contribution to the culture and heritage of Ontario.

### DIAPERS

**Mr. Adams:** Conventional disposable diapers are a symbol of the strengths and weaknesses of our society. A boon to millions, including the Koning-Keenan quads of Peterborough, they are convenient and efficient for their immediate use. But disposal creates problems, also typical for our society. The plastic in them is not degradable; it persists in dumps for ever. The contents of used diapers are deposited in places not designed to receive them, producing dangerous chemical reactions. Given the will, there are many partial and complete solutions to disposable-diaper problems, most of them economical.

We could keep disposable diapers, using degradable plastic, and regulate disposal of contents. We could encourage the use of reusable diapers, either plastic or cloth. Laundering these includes appropriate disposal of contents. Since Bruce Knapp and Peterborough city council attracted attention to this problem, I have received sample reusable plastic diapers from Contact Sales of Quebec and heard of others from Ontario and Quebec. I have heard from diaper laundering services, including a new one established in Peterborough which acquired 18 customers within a few hours.

These illustrate the job creation potential of reuse and recycling. Disposable diapers are symbolic of general problems facing society, in that they are creating problems for the very people they are designed to serve—in this case, babies.

## EMPLOYMENT ADJUSTMENT

**Mr. Hampton:** In the runup to the negotiation of a trade deal with the United States, one of the first things we bargained away was control over our softwood lumber and softwood lumber exports. It was the softwood lumber export tax. The province said that it would use the proceeds from the softwood lumber tax to assist northern Ontario communities that were hurt by the imposition of the 15 per cent export tax.

A stud mill is closed in Kenora, putting some 125 people out of work. A sawmill in Hudson has had several layoffs. Longlac has been hit; Timiskaming has been hit. What assistance has the province provided to these communities in the way of retraining allowances or relocation assistance? Little, if anything.

Last week, we had further examples of the economic and employment dislocations that will result from our new trade relationship with our neighbour to the south. Yet what is the government's response to this? These dislocations, these losses of jobs are somehow not the responsibility of the province and the province should not respond or this province need not respond. Communities all across Ontario, northern Ontario and southern Ontario, are being hurt and it is time for the government to live up to its obligations under the softwood lumber tax issue and also other obligations to meet the needs of some of the employees who have been dislocated.

## AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

**Mr. Runciman:** Last Thursday, the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board established a maximum 12.5 per cent profit level for companies providing auto insurance in this province. The announcement was not well received, but that should not be a surprise to this government, a government that forged ahead with a massive and costly intervention in the private auto insurance sector, apparently for ideological reasons. The Progressive Conservative Party has said from the outset that establishment of the auto insurance board would not make anyone happy.

Our party predicted that it would not reduce auto insurance rates; that it would drive companies out of the business, limiting consumer choice; that it would establish a large and costly bureaucracy that consumers, one way or the other, would pay for, and that it would ultimately, much to the glee of the New Democratic Party and its soulmate, the Attorney General (Mr. Scott), lead us into the quagmire of government-run auto insurance.

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Runciman:** If this government were serious about reducing auto insurance rates, it would have taken steps to reduce the cost of settling claims. Currently, the cost of settling the average bodily injury claim is over \$20,000, but this government, now in office for over three years, has done nothing to deal with claims settlement. Why is tort reform not on the front burner?

Perhaps the bias of the Attorney General towards a government-run system is the answer, for without tort reform and with the automobile insurance board forcing more and more insurers out of the auto insurance business, pressures to institute a government-run system will surely grow. Consumers' only hope is the election of a Conservative government in 1991.

1340

## BRAMPTON SPORTS HALL OF FAME

**Mr. Callahan:** I think every member of the House is proud of the riding he comes from and the particular home town that spins that riding. I would like to rise today to recognize three people who were honoured in my community at the eighth annual Sports Hall of Fame dinner.

One of them is Julie White, who is a competitor in track and field. In fact, she competed in the pentathlon in the Olympics as well as in the high jump.

We also have Ralph Adsetts, who was very much involved in tennis in our community and, in fact, was a builder of the tennis activities in our community, providing us with a good number of very significant competitors.

In addition to that, we have Bill Graham, who is a successful contractor in our community. In addition to having played in the Canadian Football League, he is also today a very successful horse breeder and racer.

I salute those people and I would encourage other members of the House, if they do not have this already, to take steps to find appropriate people in their communities to recognize the significant Canadians who live in their own ridings.

## STATEMENT BY THE MINISTRY

## SCHOOL DRINKING WATER

**Hon. Mr. Ward:** Last Friday, my ministry became aware of the existence of a series of drinking water tests undertaken by an independent laboratory on behalf of CBLT news which



suggested the presence of soluble lead at levels higher than permitted by federal standards. The drinking water was taken from water fountains in elementary schools constructed between 1983 and 1988 in the regions of Durham, York, Peel and Halton.

Information supplied on Friday by the Durham Board of Education indicated that the tests had been conducted on samples taken from five elementary schools within that board. Early Sunday morning, a team from the Ministry of the Environment conducted verification testing at those schools.

The results of the initial round of verification tests conducted on Sunday have confirmed that, in a number of instances, the presence of soluble lead in the samples does exceed the federal limit of 50 parts per billion.

Both the independent tests and the Ministry of the Environment's tests indicate that the lead levels are elevated when the taps are first turned on after several hours or days of nonuse. The ministry's tests indicate further that when the drinking fountains are permitted to run for two minutes following the first test, lead levels are consistently below the recommended limit.

The verification tests, which began this morning, involve the taking of an initial sample without running the water, a second sample after running the water for two minutes and a third sample after running the water for five minutes.

Water resources officials in the Ministry of the Environment advise me that the source of the lead detected in all the samples is not believed to be the municipal water supplies. Recent testing of water supplies in 42 Ontario municipalities revealed no instance of lead levels exceeding federal standards for drinking water.

The Ministry of the Environment further advises me that the presence of lead in these samples is believed to be related to the use of lead solder in copper pipes used in the water circulation systems within new schools. The situation is accentuated because the schools are not used on weekends and drinking water sits in the pipes, permitting lead to be leached out of solder residue into noncirculating water. As a result, the water flowing through drinking fountains and taps during the first few minutes of use on a Monday morning may be more likely to contain an elevated level of soluble lead.

After discussing this possibility in consultation with officials of various ministries, we have determined that a series of steps is appropriate. I am taking the following precautionary measures to assure parents that no children will be

permitted to consume drinking water at school if there is a possibility that water may contain a higher-than-acceptable level of soluble lead.

First, we are conducting verification testing in elementary schools in the regions of Durham, York, Peel and Halton, with results expected tomorrow.

Second, all schools are being advised to run their drinking water for a minimum of five minutes before permitting students to consume it.

Third, drinking water in all Ontario elementary schools will be tested on a priority basis beginning with new schools and older schools that may have lead pipes.

I am assured by the chief medical officer of health that the situation I have described is not health-threatening. A recent study of blood-lead levels in schoolchildren has revealed that elevated lead levels in water do not result in health-threatening lead levels in the blood of those children.

We believe, however, that the current situation requires an immediate, thorough and reasonable response conducted in a careful and orderly fashion based on our fundamental commitment to protect the health of our children.

As an additional precautionary measure, the chief medical officer of health is prepared to proceed immediately to test the blood levels of students in situations he deems appropriate.

## RESPONSES

### SCHOOL DRINKING WATER

**Mrs. Grier:** I am reassured by the statement of the Minister of Education (Mr. Ward) that elevated lead levels in water do not result in health-threatening lead levels in the blood of children. I hope that those tests are in fact going to be carried on very widely because the situation as described by the minister today is extremely worrying.

It is obvious from the causes of the problem that the minister has explained that this is a problem not necessarily confined to schools. There are many other institutions, both private and public, which probably have the same kinds of pipes, the same kinds of lead soldering and probably the same kinds of lead levels.

I think this House ought to have from the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley) a very comprehensive statement about the condition of water in this province where we know there are pipes that could be contributing to lead in water supplies. What we also ought to have

from the Minister of the Environment are legislated standards for drinking water.

We do not have them in this province and it is interesting that the Minister of Education refers to the exceedance of the federal levels and the federal guidelines. What we have in this province are only guidelines or objectives. We do not have legislated standards for drinking water. We do not have an opportunity for parents or the public, who think that perhaps their health is being threatened by the existence of lead from sources over which they have no control, to initiate action in order to get some recompense. We do not have an opportunity for public discussion and involvement as to what the levels of lead that are acceptable are.

If we had a safe drinking water act, we would then have that opportunity and there is on the Orders and Notices of this Legislature a private member's bill standing in my name that would do just that. It would provide a safe drinking water act for the people of this province.

I think that the statement we have had today from the Minister of Education proves that such legislation is long overdue and I hope this incident will perhaps be a spur to the government which, before it was a government, said we needed a safe drinking water act to finally move to put in place legislated drinking water standards for the province as a whole.

**Mrs. Marland:** We are concerned in our caucus about the quality of drinking water in older areas. It is very interesting to note that one of the four regions that are listed in the minister's statement today is the region of Peel. I introduced a private bill in this Legislature two years ago dealing with the problem of rusty water in the southern part of the region of Peel.

At that time, we were told that it was the responsibility of the federal government to cost the replacement of infrastructure in older areas in this province. Given the fact that we have this problem addressed today dealing with lead, it might be quite interesting—I know that the Minister of Education has referred to lead soldering in new pipes; it is probably equally true that the lead levels that have been detected come from old pipes and old installations which are long overdue for replacement.

Since this is the government with the \$1.3-billion tax grab in 1988, and we are in the affluent end of the 1980s, it would be great if these programs that are now putting people's health at risk could be addressed with some real money from the Treasurer (Mr. R. F. Nixon) to the local

municipalities to help cost-share the replacement of rusty and outdated lead pipe installations.

**1350**

Certainly, the testing of these children is only one area of concern. This morning, I was speaking at an elementary school in Mississauga where the children were asking me whether the government expected them to drink rusty water. I told these children that the water from the lake comes into those pipes from the water treatment plants and that when it goes through that system the water is actually safe to drink.

It is a pretty sad commentary that when it gets into the local water lines to the homes and to the schools and institutions, all the millions of dollars we spend on purifying Lake Ontario water suddenly is confronted with the kind of pollution referred to in the minister's statement today.

When the Minister of Education is sitting around the cabinet table in the cabinet sweepstakes, I hope he is able to lobby for some money for infrastructure replacement in this province. This is an ageing province and the cost of infrastructure replacement has to be borne, not only by the federal government but by the provincial government as well. I am sure that is what the Minister of Education is asking for, to address the need for a solution to these lead pipes to which his statement was addressed today.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### EMPLOYMENT ADJUSTMENT

**Mr. B. Rae:** I have some questions for the Premier about this epidemic of plant closures we have seen in this province in the last week. I want to ask the Premier whether he is finally prepared to admit that when it comes to our employment standards law, when it comes to our labour relations law and when it comes to our private pension legislation, it is indeed the province that is responsible. I wonder if he is finally going to stand up in this House and take some jurisdictional responsibility for what is going on in the province.

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** The honourable member is quite right. A number of those acts are under our responsibility.

**Mr. B. Rae:** With that admission from the Premier, I wonder if he can tell us when the province intends to comply with the recommendations, even of the majority on the standing committee on resources development, in its Report on Plant Closures and Community and Employee Adjustment which came out in March



1987. It made some very specific recommendations on changes that are required in our employment standards law, in our pension legislation, in our labour relations legislation and on new community adjustment funds that will be established which will provide a distinct benefit for those workers who are being affected by change.

I wonder if the Premier can tell us, when is he going to do something which even his own members told him should be done in March 1987?

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** My honourable friend has asked me a number of questions there pertaining to a number of pieces of legislation. I could start one by one. If we look at the severance questions here, the members will be aware that Ontario, in many ways, leads North America on the question of severance and notice.

**Mr. Mackenzie:** That does not say much.

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** My honourable friend says it does not say much, but I can say that this government has been moving progressively on these issues for a number of years. We can look at the question of community adjustment; I think there are programs that can be done. We have instituted those in northern Ontario as my honourable friend knows, with the northern Ontario heritage fund.

My honourable friend will also be aware that the Macdonald commission, when it recommended the so-called free trade business, also recommended massive funds, some \$4 billion, for community adjustment. We have not seen that forthcoming from the federal government.

We have been spending with quite dramatic increases in job training. Our budget is up some 98 per cent in the province over the last couple of years, and I think that we have been making a number of progressive moves in that regard.

With respect to the question of the wage guarantees and the Brown report that my honourable friend, if he has not referred to will refer to in the future, the Minister of Labour (Mr. Sorbara) has been negotiating with the federal government because Mr. Brown, as I recall, said that the federal government has the primary responsibility of looking after bankruptcy.

I say to my honourable friend in conclusion, because I am sure the Speaker is going to criticize me for speaking too long, that these are a great source of concern to me and to this government. As I said, by almost any standard, we have the most progressive legislation in North America today. It is constantly under a state of review and if we can improve it to keep jobs here, we will

obviously do so. But the question all members of the Legislature want to put their minds to is, will new legislation in this province keep this province more competitive? Will it create new jobs? Those are the contexts in which all these matters have to be reviewed.

**Mrs. Grier:** I hope the Premier is going to find some company that attributes its closure to free trade, and therefore he can pin the blame on the federal government. The responsibility for dealing with plant closures lies in the jurisdiction of this province. I want to say to the Premier that when Goodyear Canada closed down in Etobicoke-Lakeshore, as PPG Canada is doing, there was a lot of concern expressed by the Premier and by members of his government. There was a lot of discussion. There were a number of meetings. In fact, the Premier said he hoped Goodyear would open its books and justify the closure.

Can the Premier tell the House how he can explain to the workers at PPG Canada that despite all of that concern and all of that discussion, there has been nothing done by this provincial government to make the situation any different for the workers at PPG today than it was for the workers at Goodyear? There has been no legislative change to demand justification, to give communities—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order; the question has been asked.

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** I say to my honourable friend that those matters are obviously a great source of concern to this government. The question the honourable member would want to ask herself is, would a piece of legislation protect those jobs in perpetuity? Would it protect the workers in perpetuity or would it be giving them false hopes in that regard? The Goodyear plant was a different situation. As the member knows, it moved to Napanee and now has a world-class facility that will be competitive.

Interjection.

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** The member disagrees with our helping that factory, and that is fair enough. There were a number of people dislocated in that situation.

My honourable friend is aware that there are a number of job dislocations going on constantly, irrespective of the free trade agreement. I think the member and I have exactly the same view on how the free trade agreement will accelerate a number of these problems, but then the question for the government and this Legislature is, do we want to bring in punitive legislation or do we

want to bring in other kinds of legislation? What kind of legislation would really assist in helping these workers in these jobs?

We believe we have a real responsibility to help the workers to relocate and readjust. We have been increasing massively our expenditures in job training. Members have seen, at the same time, very serious cutbacks from the federal government. It has been cut back some 32 per cent in this province over the last four years.

What we believe is that we need now a massive community adjustment and worker relocation program on a federal basis. I can tell my honourable friend that if she looks at the record of this government, I think she will find it pretty impressive. What we need now is a massive national program. I have called upon the Prime Minister and the federal ministers to put this number one on the federal policy agenda so that we can respond to the real problem that real human beings are going to have, not just in Ontario but right across this country.

**Mr. Speaker:** New question, the Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. B. Rae:** The Premier is showing himself to be the best flunky the chamber of commerce ever had in this province.

#### WORKERS' COMPENSATION

**Mr. B. Rae:** I have a question for the Minister of Labour. On Friday, the minister will no doubt know, Norm Smyth and Peter Finn, both of whom have worked at McDonnell Douglas aircraft company, described their situation for the Ontario public. Mr. Smyth had worked at McDonnell Douglas for 20 years. Unbeknown to him, he was working on asbestos for many, many years and he now suffers from asbestosis, for which he has had an operation.

Since this information was made available to him last week and I am sure he has been able to look into it, I wonder if the minister can explain why it is the Workers' Compensation Board is not prepared to give Mr. Smyth the pension, when he has been off work for over one year, has had to sell his home and up till this time has received no pension whatsoever from the Workers' Compensation Board.

1400

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** Just in relation to information on the situation at McDonnell Douglas, when Mr. Smyth and others attended a news conference sponsored by the New Democratic Party—indeed, the Leader of the Opposition was there—he regrettably, I think, announced to the public that there were no

standards for aluminum in the workplaces of Ontario. I think it is important to correct that little bit of misinformation in this House. There are standards in Ontario. Indeed, they are some of the most stringent standards in the world, equal to those of Sweden, and Sweden is often cited as a jurisdiction with very high standards.

The standards in this province, as I said, are among the highest in the world and our obligation in the Ministry of Labour is to ensure that those standards are complied with. The information I am given by officials from the Ministry of Labour is that those standards are now being complied with at McDonnell Douglas.

**Mr. B. Rae:** It is funny, Mr. Speaker; I must have some problem. I asked a question of the minister about a particular worker and his claim for asbestosis. If the minister now wants me to ask a question about a worker who has a claim for aluminum, I will be glad to do so.

Three hundred workers out of 1,200 workers who have been tested at McDonnell Douglas have aluminum levels that are medically too high, in some cases, four, five and six times higher than that which is medically normal, and 30 workers out of 60 workers at de Havilland Aircraft of Canada who have been similarly tested also show high aluminum levels.

Since the minister is so proud of the levels that have been established by his Ministry of Labour, I wonder if he can explain why no workers, including Peter Finn—his doctor has said Mr. Finn should stay off work and should not go back to an aluminum contaminated area, and has said that in the presence of what he calls “an early cognitive deficit,” with the combination of this with aluminum he is very concerned that these two could be related.

I wonder if the minister could explain why the Workers' Compensation Board, contrary to what the minister has just said, has not established any workable standard for aluminum overdose or for aluminum poisoning, and has not recognized any brain problems or bone marrow problems or other problems that in the view of many neurologists are connected to aluminum? What is he going to do about the fact that there are literally hundreds of workers in the aircraft industry today, 2,100 of whom have sent the minister letters—I would like to send these letters over to the minister, if I may—

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you.

**Mr. B. Rae:** None of these workers are receiving a nickel in claims from the Workers' Compensation Board, not a cent—



**Mr. Speaker:** Order; the question has been well put.

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** In the case of Mr. Smyth and some of the other people whom the Leader of the Opposition mentioned, he should know full well that the Workers' Compensation Board and the tribunals within the Workers' Compensation Board are the appropriate forum to make those determinations. It would be capricious in the extreme for me to stand up in this House and say how those determinations should be made or what decision the Workers' Compensation Appeals Tribunal should make.

The larger questions as to the risks associated with aluminum are serious questions. Those questions are being and will be referred to the Industrial Disease Standards Panel so that we can try and come to grips with them. I tell the Leader of the Opposition that the scientific evidence available to the Workers' Compensation Board, and to the world in general, right now is inconclusive in the extreme. There is no evidence to associate, from what I am told by the scientific community, those sorts of diseases with those sorts of exposures.

If he wants me to stand up in this House and say that I will make the conclusion notwithstanding what the scientific data suggest, he has the wrong minister and the wrong forum.

**Mr. B. Rae:** That is what his predecessors in the Progressive Conservative Party said about asbestos. That is what his predecessors said about gold mining. That is what his predecessors said about radiation. What do we have to do, pile the bodies up on the floor of this Legislature before he is going to understand there is a problem? That is what it comes down to.

I would like to ask the minister what his advice is to the workers who now have blood levels that are three and four times as high as they should be under medical conditions. Is his advice to those workers that they have no problem and should be carrying on as if there is no difficulty and no question with respect to their health? Is that what he is telling those workers? I would love to take what he says and be able to wrap it around his neck in a few months' time when we find out precisely how much is going on in these plants and what problems—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** The Leader of the Opposition certainly is resorting to some rather fancy rhetoric today in this House. Let me, as calmly as I can, try to explain to him that the matter of levels of acceptable exposure limits in facilities like McDonnell Douglas and others will

be reviewed by the Joint Steering Committee on Hazardous Substances in the Workplace at its upcoming meeting, that the question of exposure to these substances will be dealt with on an urgent basis by the Industrial Disease Standards Panel and that the appropriate forum to determine whether or not a claim should succeed before the Workers' Compensation Board ought not to be the Ministry of Labour, but the Workers' Compensation Appeals Tribunal.

I plead with the Leader of the Opposition not to create the misimpression in this province that somehow we have an arbitrary system where ministers of labour intervene and adjudicate based on political pressure from that party or any other individual in this province.

#### EMPLOYMENT ADJUSTMENT

**Mr. Harris:** My question is to the Premier. In the report of the Premier's Council entitled *Competing in the New Global Economy*, numerous recommendations are given, one of which, recommendation 3, deals with labour market adjustments. It states, "The Premier's Council should examine the labour adjustment issues of restructuring in Ontario's core industries and work with the government to develop a comprehensive approach to meeting the adjustment needs of workers in these industries."

The Premier's own council goes on and says, "Specific issues which the council believes will need to be examined include:...the subsequent economic fortunes of workers displaced during industry restructurings, including their eventual employment situation and income levels."

Can the Premier tell us what measures have been taken to act upon this recommendation, with regard specifically to older workers in the 55-to-64 age group who are virtually untrainable for other jobs?

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** I can tell my honourable friend that is exactly what the council is applying its mind to at the present time in the so-called second phase of the council's work. I will be happy to report back when the council reports in the not-too-distant future.

**Mr. Harris:** Perhaps the Premier can explain why the province of Ontario is one of only three provinces that has yet to participate in the federal program for older worker adjustments. It is a program that has been under review by this government and the federal government since 1986, a cost-sharing assistance program designed for older workers aged 55 to 64 who have no prospects for re-employment following major permanent layoffs.

Given the fact that this program complements and in fact answers a specific recommendation that is made in the Premier's Council report, how can the Premier justify Ontario's being one of only three provinces not to participate?

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** I am glad my honourable friend raised that question. As my honourable friend will know, the federal government historically has picked up 100 per cent of that program under the Unemployment Insurance Act and the provisions thereof. Now the federal government is trying to get rid of that responsibility and put it on to the provinces. My honourable friend will be aware there is a serious program of offloading to the provinces. Just as they have capped our funding for apprenticeship when we desperately need it in this world, just as they have cut close to \$1 billion out of job training, they are trying to do the same thing with this program as well.

I can tell the member discussions are ongoing, but very clearly the federal government has brought in this new act, the free trade act, and has a very serious responsibility to exactly those people. He may want to talk to his close friends in Ottawa to get them off the puck and doing something serious about these problems.

**Mr. Harris:** The Treasurer (Mr. R. F. Nixon), in prompting the Premier, forgot to mention that yes, unemployment insurance is the responsibility of the federal government for the first year. After unemployment insurance runs out, it becomes 100 per cent the responsibility of the province. So there is a case and there is a program, and seven other provinces have agreed that there is a need for a federal-provincial program to take place in an area that would be total provincial jurisdiction. The feds have offered to pay 70 per cent of it, and yet Ontario has chosen to leave these workers out on their own for the sake of not picking up their 30 per cent.

This is a long-term program, not just the unemployment insurance part of it, and I would ask the Premier again: His own council says the province should be doing something about it, the feds have come up with a program worked out with seven other provinces, why has he totally abandoned the older workers in that age category in not joining in that program?

1410

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** Let me tell my honourable friend that we have our own programs in that regard, the Transitions program. Discussions are ongoing with the federal government, but it goes back to something I said to my honourable friend a little earlier. The federal government is trying

to get out of its responsibility in that regard, and what we are saying is that—

**Mr. Harris:** No, they are not. They are moving into a totally provincial area and offering 70 per cent of the money.

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** I can say to my honourable friend that that, in my view, does not conform to the facts as they have developed over the constitutional history of this country. We are there, ready to take our responsibility, but when you see these cutbacks in every single area and you see the aggrieved results as a result of the free trade agreement, then the member opposite is going to have to ask himself whose responsibility it is.

#### PROPOSED HOSPITAL MERGER

**Mr. Eves:** I have a question for the Minister of Health. Can she explain to the members of the Legislature the role of district health councils and how important that role is in planning our health care resources in the province?

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. Perhaps the Attorney General (Mr. Scott) and the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. B. Rae) could relax. Order.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** For the information of the critic for the third party, the district health council program was started in the province almost 15 years ago. Over the past year, I have visited every region of the province and met with every district health council. I have expressed my support for the program, which brings together representation from consumers, providers and government to do planning in the area of health care.

The role of the district health councils is presently under review, and I want to assure the member opposite that we are discussing with members of district health councils to ensure that that role is appropriate for the future.

**Mr. Eves:** Given how important the minister thinks district health councils are in Ontario, could she please tell this House what role the Metropolitan Toronto Health District Health Council has played in the proposed Wellesley Hospital-Sunnybrook Medical Centre merger?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** In fact, I have just recently met with representatives from both Wellesley Hospital and Sunnybrook Medical Centre to discuss their proposal. Representatives were there from the university sector as well. I know that the proposal is of some interest to the community, and I am looking forward to having



an opportunity to have ministry officials review this.

**Mr. Eves:** The minister, to my understanding, has had the report on the proposed merger since November 2. I find it very unusual that the Metropolitan Toronto District Health Council has had absolutely no involvement in this major proposal. As of last Friday, they do not even have a copy of the report, yet her ministry promised them an independent review of the report. A spokesperson at the district health council said on Friday that this deal was done in the back room, behind closed doors. There was no district health council involvement.

Why has the minister not involved the Metropolitan Toronto District Health Council in this very important merger proposal, and why has she not delivered on her commitment for their independent review? Does she not find that somewhat unusual?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** In fact, the member opposite is wrong, as usual. I have just received a copy of this report, and I know that the proponents would be pleased to share it with the district health council. I am assuming. This is not my report; this is a recommendation from the two hospitals and the University of Toronto that is presently under review by the ministry.

#### INTERVAL AND TRANSITION HOUSES

**Mr. Allen:** I have a question for the Minister of Community and Social Services on the battered women who are being turned away from the interval and transition houses because of lack of space in this province. Last week the minister disputed, he may remember, my colleague's claim regarding the number of people on waiting lists, but this morning the minister, like ourselves who met with the Ontario Association of Interval and Transition Houses, will have been very graphically shown the numbers. The names were written on the walls, on the ceilings, on the floors, on the tables and on the chairs. We were surrounded by them. You could not get away from them. There were 7,500 in number, or one woman rejected for every woman accepted.

The minister will also have learned from this morning that these children, with their mothers, would in all likelihood have had to go back to the homes from whence they came and be beaten once again. Will the minister tell us what he plans to do in future to ensure the equality of access for all battered women to the shelter, counselling, support and assistance that the transition and interval houses provide for them in Ontario?

**Hon. Mr. Sweeney:** When I became minister, the total budget in the province of Ontario for interval and transition houses and support programs within my ministry alone for family violence was \$6.9 million; as of today, it is \$32.6 million. The total amount of money going directly to shelters just for their basis support in 1985 was \$5.9 million; today it is \$19.6 million. The total amount of money for community counselling from this ministry and from this government in 1985 was zero; as of today, it is \$5.7 million. The total amount of money for emergency transportation in this province was zero; as of today, it is \$565,000. The total amount of money for child support services within the shelters was zero; as of today, it is \$2.3 million. In the last three years we have opened up 22 new shelters for a total of 282 new beds.

**Mr. Allen:** The minister always gives us his dollar figures in Technicolor; the reality is in black and white in the experience of the women who have to access beds and space in these houses. He will know that there are only 1,289 beds that, in fact, are open or under development in the interval and transition houses at the moment. That is an increase of only 109 since 1985, or nine per cent over that particular year. That is hardly the kind of increase that is anything to write home about, let alone a figure that meets the needs of the women in question.

He also knows that these women and their boards who run these houses still have to do public fund-raising. The system is not run as a public service, and it depends upon the exploitation of underpaid women who have to go out into the community to raise money to meet the balance.

What efforts is the minister going to make to ensure that services for battered women in fact are provided as fully funded, basic public services, and what will he do to ensure full and realistic staffing and living wages for the interval and transition house staffs?

**Hon. Mr. Sweeney:** When I first met with the representatives of OAITH shortly after I was made minister, they indicated to me that they had two critical concerns. The first one was to stabilize the funding for the existing transition and interval houses, because at that point in time they did not know from one week to the next, never mind one month to the next, whether they were going to be able to stay open at all, whether they were going to be able to have any staff at all, whether they were going to be able to provide service for anyone at all. So their very first

request to me was to stabilize their funding. That we have done.

As a matter of fact, we are negotiating right at the present time that, in addition to their basic per diems, which they receive through the municipalities and for which the provincial government pays 80 per cent, we will cover all of their additional approved costs for between 80 per cent and 100 per cent. The distinction between the 80 per cent and the 100 per cent is for those houses that have other sources of raising revenue. If they have no other sources of raising revenue, we will pay 100 per cent of that difference. That is exactly what they asked us to do.

The second thing they asked us to do was to provide child support workers. We now have child support workers in all of these houses.

The third thing that they asked us to do, and what we are negotiating with them right at this present time—

1420

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you. Order. New question, the member for Burlington South.

**Mr. Jackson:** My question is to the minister responsible for women's issues. This month the government has spent \$250,000 on TV ads designed to tell the public, "Wife assault—it is a crime." At the same time, the interval and transition houses, which provide emergency front-line services to victims of domestic violence, last year turned away 7,600 battered women at risk in their communities. Here are some of the names, which all parties were shown today at our meeting with the transition homes' staff. I would like the minister to keep a copy in his office, as I have, to remind him of the emergency nature of this request and the nonpartisan manner in which we should be dealing with this tragedy.

If we were to add the names of the children who are affected as well as the women, there would not be enough room on the walls of this chamber to hold all the names of those victims in this province. Is it not time the minister spent more time on services than sound bites on television and decided to fund properly the transition and interval houses—

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you. The minister.

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** I want to tell the member for Burlington South that I, too, was at the lobby session with the Ontario Association of Interval and Transition Houses. I want to tell him that during the summertime I visited a number of those houses. We all know that they operate

under very serious and constrained circumstances.

I point out to him, as I point out to the other members of this House, that just prior to the launching of the public education campaign, we increased the budget for direct services in shelters by some 33 per cent, one of the most significant increases in a provision of service of anything that the Minister of Community and Social Services (Mr. Sweeney) in his ministry is doing. We have made a dramatic difference year over year for the past three years.

The member opposite talks about the public education campaign, and I just want to remind him that on this question of family violence and assault against spouses, for the first time in this province, the government of Ontario over the past three years has taken an approach that goes beyond simply discrete initiatives in each ministry but involves now some 18 ministries in a wide variety of programs. I want to tell him that the business of educating the public, of telling every person in this province that wife assault and domestic violence are a crime and are not to be tolerated, is something I consider to be very important. I would never want to say that public education in that kind of agenda is not important, and I am sorry that my friend the member for Burlington South thinks so.

**Mr. Jackson:** I am sorry that the minister did not find it in his heart to support a private member's resolution that would have led to some badly needed court reforms for the victims of family violence in this province. I am disappointed that he did not have the courage and conviction at that point to come forward.

The workers in transition houses in Ontario are concerned about the current problems and the current waiting lists. That is what we are here to talk about today. He did not listen in June, when the Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres warned him that his summer campaign would increase demand. The centres were right; the demand was unprecedented. And the minister is not listening now, when these centres try to advise him about how he is spending these dollars. When one gets headlines like this: "Women Angered by \$750,000 Spent to Reduce Wife Assault;" "Shelters for Women Oppose Ads;" "\$750,000 Ad Campaign Draws Fire"—

**Mr. Speaker:** I am listening.

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. I am listening for a question.

**Mr. Jackson:** Thousands of women and countless thousands of children are being turned



away today. When is the minister going to stop advertising his concern and start acting on his concern?

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** I want to tell the member for Burlington South that the government's initiatives in this area are threefold: first, to provide services; second, to enhance criminalization; and third, to educate the public about the criminal nature of domestic violence—a threefold program.

The public education aspect of that campaign has not only been supported by but encouraged by OAITH and all its member organizations. I want to tell him that when I was at the shelter in Atikokan and when I was at the shelter in Sault Ste. Marie and when I was at the shelter in Thunder Bay and when I was at the shelter in Kingston, each one of them confirmed that they wanted the government to continue—

Interjection.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. The member for Burlington South does not want to listen.

#### CITY OF OTTAWA

**Mr. Chiarelli:** My question is to the Minister of Tourism and Recreation and it relates to the superb job done by Mayor Jim Durrell and the people of Ottawa in creating one of the best Grey Cup classics in history. Given the fact that virtually every Grey Cup event last week was a tremendous success, will the minister acknowledge that the city of Ottawa should be considered a major player for future tourism and recreational events?

**Hon. Mr. O'Neil:** I would certainly like to thank the member for Ottawa West for his question. I would also like to congratulate the member, the mayor of Ottawa and all those who participated in making the 76th Grey Cup game such a great success.

**Hon. Mr. Kerrio:** Won by the east.

**Hon. Mr. O'Neil:** And won by the east, yes.

I do not think I have ever seen carried out a more successful game and all the celebrations that surround it. I can assure the member that we see the city of Ottawa and the surrounding area as being one of the top destination areas in Ontario and will continue to support it in every way we possibly can.

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. I am looking at all members.

**Mr. Sterling:** On a point of privilege, Mr. Speaker: Now that the member for Ottawa West

has raised the Grey Cup in Ottawa, there was a luncheon hosted by the—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. With respect, points of privilege usually are brought up at times other than question period. Points of order are within order. Please allow the member to put his question.

#### AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

**Mr. Kormos:** I have a question for the Minister of Financial Institutions. There really should not have been any doubt, but just prior to the general election in 1987, the Premier (Mr. Peterson) announced to the province that he had a very specific plan to lower auto insurance rates in the province. If the minister has indeed been made privy to that plan, would he please tell us what that plan is?

**Hon. Mr. Elston:** I want to welcome a question from the member for Welland-Thorold. The honourable gentleman has not been in this House as long as his predecessor was, a man for whom we all had a great deal of admiration and respect because of his ability to put questions in proper context and otherwise.

I can tell the honourable gentleman that we have done a number of things which will help take some of the mystery out of the auto insurance industry for most of the consumers. In fact, most people have been quite pleased by the industry-wide hearings that have been going on under the auspices of the chairman of the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board. We are now starting to see that some of the parts are falling in place as they continue to put together a structure under which to consider rates for auto insurance in Ontario.

1430

The member was at the lockup that was held last Thursday and had the opportunity to speak to Mr. Kruger and others who were dealing with the questions addressed in the most recent report. I can tell the honourable gentleman that he, like all, is fully welcome to participate and continue to participate in the rate-setting exercise.

If the member has specific problems or concerns about the manner in which the hearings are being held to determine what rates are going to be set, I think he should bring them clearly and forcefully to the attention of Mr. Kruger and the members of the board who have been working quite hard to set the rate system in place for us. That will happen, as the member knows, next January.

Following along with those initiatives and the considerations for other reforms which are

needed in the system, this government has acted in concert with the Premier—

**Mr. Speaker:** That seems like a fairly complete answer.

**Mr. Kormos:** The government's auto insurance board has guaranteed an increase in profits for the auto insurers. That is a rate reduction plan that the drivers in this province are going to pay for through the nose. The government is guaranteeing profits. Will the government at least guarantee service? Will the government require that insurers provide coverage to all drivers in the province at the board-approved rate?

**Hon. Mr. Elston:** The honourable gentleman is not characterizing the announcement, I think, which was made last Thursday in its proper context. The 12.5 per cent return on equity figure is set there for the purpose only of establishing a benchmark upon which to consider a structure of rates. That particular setting does not guarantee anybody a profit, or anything, because the requirements of the marketplace are such that they still must write and sell insurance.

They still must have efficiencies in programming their businesses to carry out the activities which insurance companies must carry out, that is payments on losses, payment for marketing, payment for the overhead, payment of a number of expenses.

I can tell the honourable gentleman that there are no guarantees built into that announcement which was made last Thursday. He should understand that.

#### AMBULANCE SERVICES

**Mrs. Marland:** My question is to the Minister of Health. Last week in response to a question from my colleague, the member for Parry Sound (Mr. Eves) about the Halton-Mississauga ambulance strike, she said: "The situation is being monitored by the ministry. Where we have any information about specific cases, I am pleased to look into those because I want to ensure that emergency services are being maintained."

"I want to assure the member that a contingency plan is in effect and that there has been assistance provided from surrounding area ambulance services to assist in this situation."

I would like to know if the minister feels that the monitoring by her staff of this strike—which incidentally is affecting six Liberal members of this House who have chosen not to ask any questions on behalf of their constituents—is adequate in light of the fact that it took 23 hours to transfer a patient last week?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** On numerous occasions we have had the opportunity to discuss health issues in this House. I have said on those occasions that we in government and our party do not believe that health is a partisan issue. We have acknowledged that we all have the same goal, which is providing and responding to the needs, as identified, of the people of this province in as equitable a manner as possible.

Regarding the specific matter that the member raises, I have stated on a number of occasions that, in fact, emergency services are being maintained. The ministry is monitoring to ensure that is the case and that there is no risk to the public.

**Mrs. Marland:** Obviously the minister does not wish to answer my question about a 23-hour delay in transferring a patient. There is one thing I do agree with—she says this is a nonpartisan issue. I just wish that the Liberal government would share in the concern that our caucus has on this issue.

The minister has said that there are numerous occasions for us to discuss this issue and other related health issues. She also replied last week that she had been assured that, in fact, emergency services are being maintained and there is no risk to the public; the minister might like to know that last week there was call for an ambulance from Oakville-Trafalgar Memorial Hospital at noon, and that call was replaced and monitored all afternoon for six hours. At six o'clock—

**Mr. Speaker:** Do you have a question?

**Mrs. Marland:** The minister has to have this background, Mr. Speaker to answer the question. At six o'clock—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. Our standing orders do allow, if they are lengthy questions or lengthy responses, that you can put them on the Orders and Notices, but if you prefer to place your supplementary briefly, that would be fine.

**Mrs. Marland:** I would be happy to, Mr. Speaker. Can the minister explain why, when at six o'clock the doctor found that the call, in fact, had been cancelled by the dispatcher who had called the hospital, a dispatcher who is not a medical person, who had established that the patient was in stable condition in hospital environment and the dispatcher cancelled that call and, through a lie, told the hospital that a doctor had cancelled it and he finally admitted to the doctor that he had cancelled it without—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. Would the member take her seat? Minister.



**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** I have said to the member that I would be pleased to investigate any specific complaints or situations which she would like to bring to my attention. It is my understanding, from the information that I have, that this was an issue of conflicting medical judgement. I would be pleased, if she has additional information, to investigate further.

**Mrs. Marland:** That is a lie.

**Mr. Speaker:** The member for Mississauga South (Mrs. Marland), really.

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. New question.

#### STUDENT NEWSPAPER

**Ms. Poole:** I have a question for the Minister of Colleges and Universities. Last week engineering students at the University of Toronto voted to keep their student newspaper, the Toike Oike, as is with no changes. Over the years this paper has offended and insulted not only its fellow students but also various minorities, and particularly women. It has made what it calls jokes about feminists, acquired immune deficiency syndrome, incest and rape, and its latest edition contained an ad for a machine to remove women's breasts. I would ask the minister: Does she consider it appropriate that this kind of degrading material is being subsidized by the taxpayers to the extent that the Toike Oike is provided an office and facilities at the university campus at taxpayers' expense?

**Hon. Mrs. McLeod:** I do think it is important, first of all, to clarify the fact that the ministry does not provide funds to support the operating cost of student newspapers. Those are covered through student activity fees. I suppose it is true to say that indirectly, through our transfer payments, in the sense that the student newspaper may be operating within the university's physical space, there is some indirect subsidy. As with all transfer costs, of course, the management of those funds is through the university administration, and the ministry does not have jurisdiction to intervene directly in this particular issue.

Having said that, I think it is fair to state that from a very personal perspective, I neither appreciate nor in any way condone the kind of material that appears in the University of Toronto engineering newspaper.

**Ms. Poole:** I thank the minister for those words, and I would be the last to try to interfere with the university's autonomy in its right to manage its own affairs. However, I do believe

this is an issue on which our government should provide leadership. Would the minister undertake to make the following request of the president of the University of Toronto, who has been quite vocal himself in his condemnation of the Toike Oike: that the school begin immediately to charge the engineering society market rents for the public space they are using to promote this distorted brand of journalism.

1440

**Hon. Mrs. McLeod:** Again, I would have to suggest that it simply would not be appropriate for me to intervene with such a directive given the fact that this is within the jurisdiction of the university administration.

I do think it is extremely appropriate that the president of the university, Dr. Connell, has expressed his very strong concerns on this issue. It is also appropriate that their university affairs committee is going to continue to pursue the issue.

It is my understanding that in fact they are considering a regulation that all campus media would be required to conform to a code of ethics in order to receive further university support.

#### SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

**Mr. Allen:** To the Minister of Community and Social Services. It is now almost three months since Judge Thomson tabled his report of the Social Assistance Review Committee on providing the minister with a blueprint to tackle poverty in Ontario.

This morning, a network of some 40 persons representing almost as many groups who formally advised Judge Thomson with respect to that report, met to express their dismay that despite the finding of the report that many of the system's present worst failures should be acted upon with a genuine sense of urgency, the government has yet to bring forward one proposed action in response to Thomson's proposals. He said at the time that within two months, any self-respecting government that had the political will would find many things to act upon.

The minister said in September that he would be making a statement of his intentions in October when the House convened. To date, no statement has been forthcoming.

There is really only one question we have and the poor of Ontario have, and that is: In God's name, how long do we have to wait?

**Hon. Mr. Sweeney:** As a matter of fact, we preceded Judge Thomson's report by one initiative and that is the \$20 million for utility costs.

That is in the report. We had announced that even before the report itself was announced.

Second, I indicated very clearly when the report was released that I would be making an announcement in this session of the Legislature. I do not believe I said in October. If I did, it was incorrect.

I am as interested as the honourable member is in getting some initiative started on this. However, the member will realize that the first stage alone, as costed by Judge Thomson, is \$400 million. There are not any initiatives in there that do not have a price tag attached to them, and I have to find within my ministry's budget and within the budget of the total government, the resources to implement some of these. As soon as I can put that package together, I will be making a public announcement first of all in this House before any place else.

**Mr. Allen:** The first stage was easily separable into the major cost factor which was the increase in the rates and all the other suggestions, which were very many, and which could have been done at very modest cost in relationship to the total bill for the first stage.

I think the one judgement as to whether he is really serious about implementing Thomson at any early stage would come with the implementation of recommendation 273 which reads: "The provincial government should provide funding for a council of consumers of social assistance, with a mandate to provide ongoing advice on the design and development of the social assistance system."

If the minister is serious, that is not a big cost. May I ask the minister: Is he going to do this? When is he going to do it? How will he do it? And when is he going to, through this means or any other, give assistance immediately to the poor of Ontario who are waiting desperately on his very words?

**Hon. Mr. Sweeney:** My recollection is that the report recommended with respect to the rates themselves, whether they be general welfare or family benefits, that there be a separation of shelter cost and all other costs and that—I think the expression was market basket. The group my friend refers to would in fact advise the government as to what the makeup of that market basket should be.

When I was first approached after the report was released to indicate if there were any recommendations with which I had concern, that was one of the ones I referred to. As a matter of fact, I think it was one of only about two or three about which I made any expression of concern. It

is precisely because that would take out of the responsibility of government a very significant cost item.

We have not ruled it out as we have not ruled on any of the major recommendations, but I want to tell the honourable member that particular recommendation does cause me some concern because it would literally put in the hands of a nongovernmental body a recommendation for a very significant amount of money.

As the member knows, our total budget for social assistance this year is \$2.3 billion; that is a lot of money.

#### FRENCH-LANGUAGE SERVICES

**Mr. Runciman:** I have a question for the Minister of Health. The St. Lawrence Valley Personnel Association recently contacted me expressing concerns about an advertisement that appeared in Ontario papers. I have just supplied the minister with a copy of the ad. The ad calls for candidates for a personnel officer at the Brockville Psychiatric Hospital and it is asking candidates to have "excellent English and superior oral and written French-language skills."

Can the minister tell me why, in an area not designated under Bill 8, she is requiring two languages and why the candidates are required to have better French-language skills than English?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** For the information of the member, the ministry is committed to the implementation of Bill 8 and the provision of French-language services for the people of this province who require them. I want to tell him that we are particularly concerned that access to our psychiatric hospitals be made available to those people who require this. It is my understanding that the Brockville hospital also serves the Ottawa area, which is a designated area.

**Mr. Runciman:** The administrative staff at the hospital think this is ridiculous. I want to say there are 14 patients at the hospital whose mother tongue is French.

There have been some very vocal concerns in eastern Ontario about the implications of Bill 8 and the possible job losses to unilingual anglophones. I think this is a completely new wrinkle. We are talking about a community with less than one per cent mother-tongue French and the minister is doing nothing to alleviate those very valid concerns.

I am wondering if the minister is prepared to support the request of my colleague the member for Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry (Mr. Villeneuve) and the member for Sudbury East



(Miss Martel) to hold public hearings on the way Bill 8 is being implemented across this province.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** I am very proud of the progress the Ministry of Health has made in implementing the provisions of Bill 8 in a sensitive and responsible manner. I invite the member to join with us in support of this very important piece of legislation.

#### SCHOOL OPENING EXERCISES

**Mrs. Fawcett:** My question is for the Minister of Education. There seems to be a lot of confusion in my riding of Northumberland concerning the saying of the Lord's Prayer in the public school system. Letters that are coming into my office daily indicate that the board is not allowing prayers of any faith to be said since the original letter was sent from the ministry in September.

My question to the minister is, are public schools presently allowed to say the Lord's Prayer during opening and closing exercises as long as prayers of other cultures are also used and no one prayer takes an order of importance over the other?

**Hon. Mr. Ward:** The member is referring, of course, to a recent decision of the Ontario Court of Appeal dealing with a component of the regulations under the Education Act relating to religious exercises as part of opening exercises for each and every school day. I want to stress to the member that the court's decision did not rule out a spiritual component of those opening exercises, nor did it ban the use of the Lord's Prayer as part of those opening exercises. It merely stressed and urged boards which wished to have a religious or spiritual component as part of their opening exercises to recognize and have due regard to the multifaith traditions that exist in Ontario today and that no one religion be given a position of primacy.

That decision of the court was followed up by a letter that was sent to each and every board in this province, reminding them to have due regard for that court's decision.

At some point in the very near future, I hope to be coming forward with some recommendations for new regulations to help clarify the situation, but I do want to stress that although many boards are choosing to exercise the option of not having religious exercises to open the school day, they are not doing so as a result of any directive from my ministry or the decision of the court.

1450

**Mrs. Fawcett:** I thank the minister very much. I think that does clear up quite a few

questions from schools in my area. I am just wondering if there is any indication from the ministry exactly when the boards of education will be given official notice of the types of prayers that can be used.

**Hon. Mr. Ward:** When I wrote to the boards following the court's decision, the judge in his decision made reference to some of the different programs that are used by various jurisdictions throughout this province that, in fact, in his judgement were deemed to be appropriate. I suggest to any parents who are concerned over this issue that they may want to look carefully to that as some recourse in discussions with their board as the board deliberates on this particular issue.

I expect in the near future—I hope some time early in the new year—to come forward with some suggestions and possibly new regulations dealing with the issue of opening exercises that will provide further clarification and indeed be consistent with the decision of the Court of Appeal.

#### PENSION BENEFITS

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** I have a question to the Minister of Financial Institutions regarding pensions. It is a very simple question that perhaps the minister can answer today. The Friedland report was tabled many months ago. Workers all across this province want to know what the response from the government is going to be with regard to pension indexation. When is the minister going to be responding and when are we going to be dealing with legislation to index pensions in this province?

**Hon. Mr. Elston:** I want to thank the honourable gentleman for his question. As he knows, the indexing issue is one that is quite complex. We have been working on the Friedland report, along with the report that was also raised by his colleague the member for Etobicoke-Rexdale (Mr. Philip) last week and others which are dealing with the entire world of pensions.

We have a number of people who are providing us with valuable input with respect to that issue. We expect in due course to be drafting some material for further comment by those people from union, management and labour who have been providing us information.

I can tell the honourable gentleman that the issues are extremely complex and we are dealing with them issue by issue. As the items come up, we will be addressing them and we will be

bringing forward our suggestions in due course to the Legislative Assembly.

**Mr. Speaker:** The member for Carleton with a point of privilege.

#### GREY CUP LUNCHEON

**Mr. Sterling:** On a point of privilege, Mr. Speaker: During question period, I raised the point with regard to this government's treatment of members of the Legislature. Last Friday, the Premier (Mr. Peterson) held a luncheon in Ottawa for the Grey Cup. Every MPP in the Ottawa-Carleton area was invited to this luncheon, save one. That one happened to be a member of the opposition.

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. I am listening to a point of something here.

**Mr. Sterling:** My point is this: If the government of Ontario is going to spend taxpayers' money to hold celebrations, which are important, I understand, then it should treat each MPP in an equal-handed manner.

It appears that this luncheon was held for the Liberal Party and not for the government of Ontario. If they are going to restrict their invitations to members of the Liberal Party, people who have donated to their party, MPPs who are Liberals in the area, then the Liberal Party of Ontario should pay for that. I would like you to investigate this particular matter as to who paid for that luncheon, whether the Liberal Party of Ontario or the government of Ontario paid for it and whether the actions of this particular government are proper.

**Hon. Mr. Conway:** On the same point, Mr. Speaker: I would be happy, on behalf of the government, to investigate the honourable member's concern and complaint, keeping in mind that this government has shown genuine sensitivity for the wellbeing of the member for Carleton (Mr. Sterling).

I can remember an occasion not that long ago when, I think at the insistence of the leader of the government, the honourable member from Manotick was sent to Lausanne, Switzerland to participate in some deliberations that were important to the people of Ontario.

I repeat that we are always anxious and keen to involve the honourable member. I do not know what happened in this case but, on behalf of the government, to alleviate you of any burden, Mr. Speaker, I will certainly examine the situation and report back. I cannot imagine that having sent the honourable member to Switzerland, we

would be unwilling to send him to Lansdowne Park.

**Mr. Speaker:** I have listened very carefully to the two members. I just cannot, in my own mind, make the decision that it is a bona fide point of privilege. However, I did note that the government House leader will take it into consideration and I think that is probably what the member was hoping for.

Petitions? Committee reports? Motions?

**Mr. Harris:** What happened to petitions? Did you call for petitions?

**Mr. Speaker:** Yes, I did. Would it be all right if we revert to petitions? Because of the activity in the chamber, we might just wait a moment. I believe the member for Nipissing has a petition.

#### PETITIONS

##### EXTENDED CARE

**Mr. Harris:** I have a petition; in fact, I have two. The first one is:

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"We believe that all residents of extended care facilities, whether it be a nursing home or a municipal home for the aged, are entitled to equal care and services according to the specific care requirements of each individual.

"Nursing home residents should benefit from the same amount of funding and kinds of services as residents of municipal homes for the aged.

"We urge the Ontario government to reform the extended care system so that it is uniform, fair and equitable with regard to funding and regulation and so that seniors in all extended care facilities receive the same quality of care they deserve.

"Further, we support Mrs. Mary Snelgrove, Mrs. Ena Symons and the Ontario Nursing Home Association in their legal challenge and their efforts to gain fair and equal treatment for nursing home residents."

It is signed by, at first blush I would say about 98 residents of the Leisure World nursing home in North Bay, and by myself.

##### RETAIL STORE HOURS

**Mr. Harris:** I also have a second petition, a tad shorter. This one says:

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:



"We urge Premier Peterson not to proceed with the legislation he has announced, but instead to strengthen protection for all workers who do not want to work on Sundays; to not pass the responsibility back to local governments, and to maintain a common pause day for working people and working families in Ontario."

This one is signed by a whole raft, a full page-load of residents of North Bay; in fact, by some outside North Bay in the Nipissing area, I notice here. I too have affixed my signature thereon.

**Mr. Speaker:** I am just a little curious about the first one. Did you sign as a member or as a resident?

**Mr. Harris:** Both.

**Mr. Speaker:** Both. Good.

**Mr. Harris:** As a resident of the riding and a future resident perhaps.

1500

## INTRODUCTION OF BILL MUNICIPAL STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT

Hon. Mr. Eakins moved first reading of Bill 192, An Act to amend the Municipal Act and certain other Acts related to Municipalities.

Motion agreed to.

**Hon. Mr. Eakins:** This legislation addresses a number of issues in the Municipal Act and the acts for the restructured two-tier municipalities that will, for example, permit the city of Toronto to make a loan to Toronto Artscape, a nonprofit corporation which is establishing a small business incubator for professional artists and crafts-persons.

The legislation will also give municipalities a general power to participate in programs established by provincial ministries, eliminating the need for specific amendments in the future, as new programs are developed. In addition, it will provide greater flexibility in the provisions relating to uniform, county-wide assessment updates, and provides that separated municipalities will only be included in such updates if they request them.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

House in committee of supply.

## ESTIMATES, MINISTRY OF HEALTH (continued)

**Mr. Chairman:** Comments or questions? The member for Simcoe West.

**Mr. McCague:** I apologize for rising ahead of the minister, but I sat here last week for quite a few hours and it seemed that when the minister got going she had quite a bit to tell us, so I thought maybe I could get in with a few questions prior to that.

The minister will know that she has agreed to see the people from the Collingwood General and Marine Hospital in a week's time. I would just say to her, without divulging what it is they want to talk to her about—not that she does not know, but not divulging publicly what they want to talk to her about—that I hope she will see her way clear to being sympathetic to the requests that they have.

The minister will also know that, about 15 months ago, the Collingwood people started a local campaign to raise funds for various needs at the hospital, and were in fact successful in raising about \$4.1 million. Although it is true that neither the minister nor her predecessors at any time said to the Collingwood hospital, "You may proceed," there were indications there that they would be allowed to proceed in due course, which at that time was considered to be a couple of years.

They are a little disappointed, but I am sure that the minister will hear what they have to say sympathetically. I am sure that the people from the hospital are quite well aware of the kinds of pressures that the minister is under for funding, but there are some things there that I think must be done in the not-too-distant future.

We did talk in question period a little about the assistive devices program and, in particular, about its effect on the hearing-impaired. The minister said one thing which she might like to correct. In response to my question, she said:

"I am very aware of this particular issue. I know there are a number of people who have been giving information. Anyone who is specifically interested in the plans and proposals should communicate directly with the ministry."

I think that it is a little inhibiting to us as MPPs, when it is suggested to my constituents that they not bother me with the complaint that they might have but that they go directly to the minister. I know the minister is shaking her head. In fairness, I did say at the start that she might want to clarify that comment, because it does not really look the best in Hansard.

You can understand the frustrations that people with hearing problems have when, according to a statement or a promise or whatever you might call it that the Premier (Mr. Peterson) made, the program was to be in place by the end

of 1988. I did ask the minister if this would be in place by the end of 1988 and I got an answer which seemed to me to indicate that she really was not going to be able to get around to the program by the end of 1988 and that it might be some time longer.

On behalf of the people whom the ministry and the minister are talking to, people who have hearing aid centres and people who need that service, I think the association—the name escapes me here for the moment—of practitioners in the hearing aid business, according to its letters, has done a tremendous amount of work on adopting specific bylaws and a strict code of ethics to govern the conduct of its members.

I think the minister would want to acknowledge that, but I hope she can understand the frustration they have, having done what they were asked to do and having been directed and redirected about three or four times over the period of time since the Premier made his announcement in August 1987. I would just like to have the minister's comments on the work which has been done by these people, and maybe she can give us something a little more specific as to the timing of the introduction of the program.

I know the minister is interested in the differential in the rates for homes for the aged and the nursing homes. The minister has the benefit, if you want to put it that way, of being on the right side of this issue. Her homes for the aged are funded more appropriately than are the nursing homes. She can certainly lay claim to her side of the equation being more appropriate.

My colleague the critic, the member for Parry Sound (Mr. Eves), raised this issue in his opening remarks. There have been a lot of people trying to get some kind of meeting of the ways of the Ministry of Community and Social Services and the Ministry of Health as it applies to the care of the elderly and seniors in homes for the aged and nursing homes.

That is a problem which was there when this government took over and which I know we tried to solve when we were government. The government came in with a resolve to do it very quickly but it is running into the same kind of roadblocks we had when we were trying to do it. I would like the minister to comment a little on how she is making out on getting the homes for the aged and the nursing homes under one ministry. I know she will be happy to do that. Great progress, no doubt.

A problem arose during this past summer which may, in fairness, be a problem of Ma Bell's rather than the minister's. In Colling-

wood, the Bell system or the emergency ambulance phone lines seemed to get into great difficulty: sometimes no answer, sometimes three times with no answer. I would just like to raise with her that people in Collingwood are told the system they are using is outdated to get to central dispatch. That is hard to understand, because it is just a brand-new installation, but it may be that the lines are slightly out of whack. The minister may look into it and report to me on that one some time in the future.

I would like to reserve the opportunity to have a second word with the minister after she answers, but I promise that I will not prolong the debate.

**1510**

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** I spoke to the critic for the third party at the beginning of this session. He mentioned that there were several members from his caucus who would like to place their questions on the agenda. If they would like to do so at this time, I believe there will be time during the rest of this session to respond to some of them. For those for which there is not time today, we will have another day for estimates.

**Mr. McCague:** I anticipated that answer. Although the minister has not been in this portfolio very long, she has learned very quickly that you can get your estimates time in fairly quickly if you have a good, lengthy statement and then you reserve all the questions until some time at the last. I congratulate her for all that and look forward to her answers.

**Mrs. Marland:** I would like to ask the Minister of Health some questions and I would like the answers today, because it is an issue of extreme urgency. It is the question that I raised with the minister in question period earlier this afternoon. She has promised from the beginning to monitor the Halton-Mississauga ambulance strike, and that matter has been raised some half-dozen times in this House. I wrote to her the week the strike began. That strike is now in its 117th day.

As I mentioned earlier this afternoon, it seems to be an ambulance strike that is of concern only to the two Conservative members of the Legislature who represent the constituents in Halton and Mississauga. There are six other members of this Legislature who represent Halton and Mississauga. They are all members of the Liberal government. Perhaps they are getting their answers in their caucus meetings or through some other route, but whatever the answers they are receiving, we do not see anyone moving to end this ambulance strike.



When we are looking at 117 days that an ambulance strike has been going on and there has been one meeting with the mediator, I have to wonder if the minister's staff is keeping her fully informed. I would think that where people's lives are at risk—and this is no exaggeration—she would insist that the mediator force the two parties to the table day after day until either they carve out an agreement to this labour dispute or they are then referred to arbitration.

I cannot see how, as the minister responsible for the health of the people of this province and, in this particular case, the people of Halton and Mississauga—and we are talking about over 800,000 people—she can sit back and say, as she said last week in answer to my colleague the member for Parry Sound when he asked her about a particular incident—every week we have incidents to report to her and every week she says that she is happy to investigate the particular incidents: "The workings of our health care system rely on people who do go that extra mile to help those who are in need of critical and urgent care and I would like to acknowledge the physician in this case who did persevere to make sure that this patient received the care that he needed."

I want to know whether the minister expects every physician to spend two or three hours on the phone in an evening trying to get help for his patients, because she goes on further to say, "I am pleased to look into" specific cases and "I want to ensure that emergency services are being maintained."

I want to tell the minister that she is not there in the evenings, her staff are not there in the evenings and this surgeon could not reach anyone. As I tried to say, but it was hard to hear this afternoon with the interjections in question period, this call for an ambulance went to the hospital at 12 noon. The hospital staff monitored all afternoon with the ambulance dispatcher—"When is the ambulance coming?"—and the ambulance dispatcher said: "We have that call. It is coming, it is coming."

Finally, at six o'clock, six hours later, when the nurse called again, the dispatcher said: "Oh, that call's been cancelled." The nurse said, "By whom?" and the dispatcher said, "Oh, that call was cancelled by a doctor at the hospital."

So the nurse got on the telephone to the doctor in case something had changed, and it may in fact have been true. The doctor had not cancelled the call. The doctor got on the phone with the dispatcher, and the dispatcher admitted to the surgeon that he had lied. He said, "I did tell the

staff that the doctor had cancelled the call, but I have to admit, Dr. So-And-So, that I cancelled the call." When the surgeon asked the dispatcher why he had cancelled the call, the dispatcher said, "I phoned the hospital and I established that the patient was in a stable condition in a hospital environment."

You can imagine what that surgeon felt. Here was a nonmedical person who did not even have the courtesy to phone the doctor who was responsible for that patient and his condition, making a decision arbitrarily to cancel a call for an ambulance. When that doctor then asked if he could speak to the dispatcher's supervisor, the answer from the dispatcher was: "Yes, you can speak to my supervisor in business hours. He will be in at 8:30 in the morning."

So when the minister—very sincerely on her part, and I believe her—says she will investigate individual situations, in this case she is not there and her staff are not there and that doctor could not reach anyone overnight. It was overnight that the patient almost died. That is not an exaggeration. I am not saying something that is not factual to be dramatic or to emphasize a point. I am simply saying to the minister that we are fortunate that patient is alive today.

When I said that in the House in question period today, I heard some of the Liberal backbenchers making comments about the fact that they did not believe that. The minister would only have to speak personally to the physician to find out that when that patient vomited during the night and aspirated, it was very, very touch-and-go for about 25 minutes about whether he was going to survive. That entire situation would have been avoided had the patient been able to be transferred to the Toronto General Hospital, where the surgeon at the Toronto General was waiting to do his surgery. He had to have the surgery in order to have his life sustained.

At 8:30 in the morning, when this same surgeon gets on the telephone again and says, "When can I have an ambulance?"—and of course now he has to have an ambulance with a team on board in case they have to intubate that patient en route in the transfer between the hospitals, so now we need an ambulance with a doctor and a nurse on board—the reply was: "If we happen to have an ambulance coming out from Metro westbound, then we'll put your patient on to go eastbound into Metro." The doctor said, "How long is that going to take?" and the answer was, "Well, it could take two or three days." At that time, the doctor finally got on the phone to my office, and my office got on the phone to the

minister's office. The ambulance came at 11:40, 23 hours and 40 minutes after the original call.

1520

I am happy to tell the minister that the patient had the surgery that day and is in stable condition, but it is far more by good luck than by anything else that that patient has survived.

I know the minister is not waiting for us to stand in this House and give her chronologies of people whose lives have expired in order to get the sensitivity of this situation into focus. "The sensitivity of this situation into focus" means that instead of looking just at the lives, we must look at the quality of life of the hundreds of patients whose response times have been delayed.

It may well be that in the majority of cases where there is an emergency and an ambulance is called, if the response time is reduced—I know my colleague the member for Burlington South (Mr. Jackson) has given examples where we have 20-minute, 25-minute, 35-minute response times—there is no way the minister can tell me that the future health of that patient is not going to be at risk in terms of recovery, more so than if the response had been reduced.

I think the bottom line of this whole question about this ambulance strike is that if her staff are monitoring response times and are satisfied with 20-minute, 40-minute, one-hour and four-hour response times, all of which we have given the minister examples of, if her staff are happy with that, then that raises the question, why do we plan to have ambulance service with the kind of response times we have? Are we throwing money out? Are we saying that normally we can get by with the kind of response times our community has had in the last 117 days? Or is what we are saying that we face the responsibility, that we know a seven-minute response time in an urban area for an ambulance is what is needed, because it is needed to sustain the quality of recovery those patients can have by having an emergency situation looked at very quickly?

In the case of the Halton-Mississauga ambulance strike, the minister says, "I have been assured that in fact emergency services are being maintained and there is no risk to the public." If that is what she thinks, perhaps she could tell me what is considered a risk to the public.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** In fact, we did discuss this issue this afternoon during question period. I think it is very important when we discuss the issue of emergency health services and ambulance services specifically to recognize that, in fact, we are talking about transfers between hospitals as well as emergency situations.

I think it is important for the member to know that we recognize that many of the calls the ambulances respond to are for interhospital transfers. In fact, they talk about what is called a tiered response, which designates the difference between an emergency and a transfer between hospitals. During the differentiation, it is very important to know that it is the hospital and the medical judgement of the attending physicians that determine when an emergency response is required or whether a transfer is what is required.

I think it is important as we talk about emergency health services to recognize that there are 131 hospital-based and private services in the province, of which approximately half we know are unionized. The negotiations regarding wages and benefits in these services are conducted between the employers and the employees. The Ministry of Health is not party to those negotiations.

We are attempting within the ministry, with the appointment of an emergency health services co-ordinator, to look at all the aspects of the provision of ambulance services' tiered response. In the many regions of the province there are numerous ways that we do respond. We know there are land ambulances and air ambulances. In fact, when I have travelled through the province, I have had an opportunity to see at first hand many of the different emergency services as they are provided across the province.

I want to tell the member opposite, as I mentioned in the House on a number of occasions, that people come from across Canada and from around the world to see how we provide what we do in this province. The fact is that we have, and should be very proud of the fact that we have, one of the very best emergency health systems, I would say, certainly in North America and probably in the world. We should be very proud of that.

I also say that the reason it is as good as it is is that we are always trying to make it better. That is why, as I said, we have recently appointed an emergency health services co-ordinator, recognizing that this is a provincial program that will respond to the different needs of the province, recognizing that there are no two regions that are absolutely identical.

I think it is important that we recognize this. For example, we have first-response teams. They are organized by groups of volunteer first-aiders who respond to medical emergencies and assist in stabilizing patients until the ambulance arrives. I met with one of these first-response teams when I travelled not far outside Kenora, as a



matter of fact, this summer. I know they are very proud of the work they do. We are very proud of them. The ministry provides training and equipment to help out in those regions. I believe that is a very appropriate response in some of those regions.

We are currently conducting a review of first-response teams in Ontario so that we will be able to establish a policy statement, because we believe that, as part of our delivery of emergency health services, it is very important that we look at this from an overall perspective and that we have policies set in place.

I mentioned tiered response. We know these issues are also under review because we think it is very important that the Provincial Emergency Health Advisory Committee be permitted to advise us. I would tell the member that if she has any advice at any time, I am always happy not only to hear her concerns but to seek her advice as well.

We know that mutual assistance between public safety agencies such as fire departments, police departments and ambulance services has existed informally for some time. That is why the term "tiered response" was used. I think it is important that we recognize that there are a number of ways in which emergency services are provided and that they work together co-operatively and responsibly around the province.

As I have said in the House, I am always—perhaps "happy" is not the right word—I am certainly interested in looking at any specific cases where the member feels that the system has not responded in a manner that she considers appropriate. I have said that, on any occasion, I am pleased to investigate and determine what the facts of the matter are. I want her to know that emergency and ambulance dispatch rely on information that comes from the hospitals and that the ability of communities to respond to assist one another is there because our dispatch is centralized.

I hope this answers some of the questions for the member opposite. I want to assure her of my concern as well as my commitment to make sure, as we look at overall provincial policies, that we recognize the important role that our ambulance services, our air ambulance services, our first-response teams, our fire departments and our police departments all play in responding to the emergency health needs of the people of this province.

1530

**Mrs. Marland:** I am sorry to tell the minister that she did not answer my questions, and I do not

really need a lecture on what the ambulance services are. I know what they are. I am disappointed to have her reading from her notes instead of answering this question. I want to stay on this question, because I have to have an answer for these physicians and surgeons and, most of all, for their patients, my constituents.

I know, of course, there are different ambulance services, I know there are intrahospital transfers and I know we have air ambulances. The interesting situation in this case that she said she would be happy to look into is that, first of all, an air ambulance would not work because it is not large enough to have the medical team on board in case this particular patient needed intubating en route. That is why they could not use the air ambulance.

She talks about the intrahospital transfers being based on the medical judgement of attending physicians. That is the whole point of this question of mine to her today. At the time, this patient's life was not in the hands of the attending physician; it was in the hands of the dispatcher. I want to know what she thinks about the fact that a dispatcher cancelled the call for this ambulance. It was not the medical judgement of the attending physician. The medical judgement of the attending physicians in this case was to ask for this ambulance and they had been asking for it for six hours. It was not their choice to have the call cancelled and it was not just an intrahospital transfer. It was not something that could be done in one hospital but it was more convenient to do it in another. There was no alternative for this patient. The patient had to be at the Toronto General Hospital.

When she talks about the fact that we have this excellent health care system, of course we do and of course I stand here as proud as anyone else in this House about the health care service and the health care system that we have in this province because of tremendous dedication and commitment, like that of the two doctors who were attending this particular patient. What does she expect them to do when we have a crisis such as these two doctors faced on behalf of their patient last week?

When she says she is willing to investigate it, she has had it for a week. Apparently, she has not investigated it or she would have the answer today. I want to know how she is going to feel when it is an investigation after the fact. She is a family person. She has relatives and children, the same as the rest of us do.

As it turned out—I have to tell the minister this because it is rather ironic—at the time that all this

was going on, I did not know the name of the patient. I have since learned that it does happen to be someone I do know in the community. I have to know how close it has to come to the minister or to her staff or to the members of her Liberal government before she says that the kind of response times we are looking at in Halton and Mississauga are simply not good enough.

I know we are into a labour dispute. I know that the Minister of Labour (Mr. Sorbara) is saying, "I suppose, Mrs. Marland, you want us to legislate them back to work and you want it deemed an essential service." As a matter of fact, I would like to see the ambulance service deemed an essential service. An ambulance service is just as essential as fire and police because it deals with lives.

In this case, when we look at 117 days with one meeting with the mediator, and that meeting was back on September 8, I have to say to her, three months later and the mediator has not made these two groups sit down together, it looks as though nobody cares that the ambulance drivers are on strike in Halton and Mississauga.

When are we going to care and when is the minister going to answer the question about response time? It is not good enough to say, "I am monitoring the response time." Maybe she has a big list in her office. Maybe her staff have a big board where they clock and register all the response times.

Maybe an hour or four hours—an hour for the case of the four-year-old boy who had swallowed rubbing alcohol and was taken to hospital in a fire truck after the firemen decided they should not wait any longer for the ambulance—maybe those times are long enough for her. I do not doubt, as I say, her expressed commitment to investigate particular instances, but how many instances does she need? When she investigates them after the fact, God knows she is fortunate those patients she is investigating are still alive.

When she says, "These decisions are made on the medical judgement of attending physicians," her own words this afternoon, will she please tell me how she can sit there and say it is acceptable to have had an ambulance dispatcher cancel this call last week, after telling the hospital for six hours that the ambulance was coming, and then have the ambulance come 23 hours and 40 minutes later? I want to know her answer to that question.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** I think it is very important for the member to understand that in fact it would not be the dispatcher who would use his or her own judgement. I have available for the member,

if she would like to review it, the dispatch priority card index. The protocols are very clear for determining what is an emergency. In this particular case, the dispatcher spoke to the hospital and it was not the dispatcher's own judgement that made the determination as to the status of the patient. I understand that what occurred was a difference in medical judgement at the hospital that resulted in the call being cancelled at the time, and it was reinstated at the request of the attending physician.

**Mrs. Marland:** I do not know where the minister is getting her information from. I realize she is dependent on what she is being told and I respect the fact that she is strapped from that point of view. I want to tell her there were two physicians involved. One was the general practitioner, the referring physician to the surgeon. The second one, the surgeon, was the surgeon in charge of this patient in the hospital, who had phoned his colleague at the Toronto General Hospital because it was a medical emergency and because his colleague at the Toronto General was the only person who could do that particular operation on that patient.

The dispatcher himself—I am not going to read his name into the record, just as I am protecting the names of the doctor and the patient, because the confidentiality of that has to remain but I will be happy to give the minister the names in person—told the doctor himself that he, the dispatcher, had made the decision to cancel the call. He told the doctor he had not spoken to anybody at the hospital.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** That is not true.

**Mrs. Marland:** That is what he told the doctor. He said, "I have established, based on my information, that the patient is in a stable condition." He did not speak to the doctor who was responsible for that patient.

As far as I am concerned, I hope that dispatcher—obviously, it is somebody in management in that ambulance service—has on his conscience what he risked for that family in leaving that patient to spend another 14 hours overnight in that hospital. It is something I do not seem to be able to convey to the minister with all the passion in my heart about this particular situation. I can see that patient, who happens to be a face and a body I know. It is just the same as if it were one of her children or one of the relatives of anybody—as soon as she recognizes we are not talking about a number or a case; we are talking about an individual here.

That dispatcher, I understand, is still working at dispatching ambulances in Halton-



Mississauga during the strike, and he had the unmitigated gall to cancel a call made by a surgeon for his patient without even having the doctor re-evaluate the patient six hours later. He did not even tell the doctor; the doctor was not involved. The doctor would not have known, had the nurse not found out that the call had been cancelled. He did not even have the gumption to say, "We have cancelled the call." All afternoon he kept saying: "Oh, it's coming. The ambulance is coming." In the meantime, that patient was going downhill.

1540

If the minister has the information that the dispatcher established the condition of the patient, I want to tell her that dispatcher established that condition on his own, without speaking to the attending physician. I think that is terribly serious and terribly critical. I would like to know what the minister plans to do about that particular incident so that I can assure those two doctors, who were working 23 hours to maintain the life of this individual, that this will not happen again during this strike.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** I think it is important to note in this case that the patient was transferred and I understand is in satisfactory and stable condition. I think it is important that we all restate that. I have said to the member, as I did today in question period, that in light of the new and additional information that she has provided, I will ask ministry officials to determine factually what occurred. It is my understanding that the dispatcher spoke to someone at the hospital who informed the dispatcher that the status of the patient had changed, that it was stable and was not considered an emergency. If that is not the fact, I will be pleased to request that the ministry investigate this matter further.

**Mrs. Marland:** I will look forward to the response after the minister's staff investigates the question of who, by names, the dispatcher was supposed to have spoken to to establish the stability of that patient.

Perhaps the minister could tell me, in the case of a physician or a surgeon in a crisis situation, as these two physicians were during the evening hours when they could not reach the dispatcher's supervisor—the supervisor works business hours and they were told they could call him at 8:30 a.m.—who else is it then that the physician who is fighting for the ambulance service for his patient in an emergency situation can turn to? We have a strike situation here, which is abnormal. What kinds of provisions for off-hours have the

ministry staff made for these physicians who need to have an ambulance for their patients?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** The central dispatch is a 24-hour service and anyone requiring emergency services can call that number, and not only the hospitals know that. In most regions where there is 911, that is one route to access, but I say to the member that it is a 24-hour service and it is available for anyone in emergency situations.

As I have said to the member before, the ministry is monitoring to ensure that the public is not at risk. We recognize there is a difference in status between emergency and nonemergency and hospital transfer. That is why I think it is important we differentiate between accessing a call based on what is a clear emergency according to the medical judgement in a hospital situation, and that which is not an emergency.

**Mrs. Marland:** Is the minister then going to be able to give us some kind of report as to what she considers to be an adequate response time for emergency calls for ambulance service? The minister is saying it is a 24-hour service. I am telling the minister that these two doctors, who also know it is a 24-hour service, by the way, were told that since the dispatcher had made the decision that that patient did not need to be transferred, there was no one else for those doctors to turn to. There was no one else for them to access about a 24-hour service until after 8:30 the next morning, and at this point it is 6:45 in the evening. So there was no alternative for those physicians. There was no one else for them to call.

When the minister says the ministry is monitoring the response times, I wonder if she could tell us, during the strike in Halton and Mississauga, how it is doing that. How is the ministry establishing that a response time has been what it needed to have been in the case of those patients? Is it following every call for an ambulance in an emergency situation? I am not talking about transfers. I am not talking about ambulances transporting people for treatment. I am talking about emergency response time only.

Are they following every single case? The minister can appreciate that because we are in a strike situation, we do not have access to the records of when the calls come in and when the patient is picked up. We do have examples where an ambulance has been on its way to one emergency and had to stop and pick up somebody else on the way because it was nearer. In one case, we had a situation where the first patient died while the ambulance picked up somebody on the way.

It may well be that that patient might have died in any case, but all I want to know is how the minister is going to be in a position to stand in this House and defend those response times, even when the strike is over. How is her staff addressing its analysis of response times and also where the patient is once the patient is transported out of the emergency situation? The patient may have stopped breathing for a certain period of time. Is her staff following up to find out whether, if the patient had been treated earlier, he would have had minimal brain damage, or would have had more recovery of his general health? What kind of analysis to response time is the minister's staff doing?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** As I have said to the member, the situation is being monitored to ensure that there is no risk to the public. There is a contingency plan in place. In fact, we know that services for nonemergency situations have been reduced to some degree so they can provide coverage for real emergencies. I think it is important that we emphasize in this House that I am assured that emergencies are being responded to appropriately.

**Mrs. Marland:** Does the minister think two ambulances for 600,000 people is sufficient?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** I will repeat again that the situation is being monitored to ensure that there is no risk to the public, that contingency plans are in place and that the ministry is monitoring.

**Mrs. Marland:** I guess there is no point in pursuing these questions, because the minister is either not willing or not in a position to answer some of the questions.

I must say it makes me feel very uncomfortable. It makes me feel very unhappy to think that it seems to be all right that the strike continue without any intervention on the part of the Liberal government.

I think that when the Liberal government found it necessary to legislate teachers back to school to teach after a two-month strike, it is beyond me that it is not necessary to legislate ambulance driver attendants back to work after in excess of a three-month strike. If the minister is happy that the response times are being monitored, and as she keeps saying, if she is assured nobody is at risk, then I think what needs to be analysed is the risk that particular patient I happen to know of, a constituent of mine, was put in last week.

1550

When this minister knows the facts behind the case of my constituent last week, I do not think

there is any way she could say that patient was not at risk. That was a trauma patient. That patient was at risk every moment until he was able to get to the hospital he had to get to to receive the surgery he needed. If we are saying a patient in that situation, waiting to be transported by an ambulance that never came for 23 hours and 40 minutes, is not at risk, then I guess I have to wonder what the ministry staff considers risk to be.

Maybe the ministry staff considers it a risk if we start having a loss of life, but God knows, we would be a pretty regressive Legislature if we felt we measured risk in terms of fatalities. We do not have to measure risk in terms of fatalities; we have to measure risk in true terms. When a patient is in a hospital for that number of hours waiting for life-sustaining surgery, then I think it takes fairly basic common sense to recognize that patient has been at risk.

If we can manage with two ambulances for 600,000 people, then I guess we have to ask why we have more ambulances normally. The answer is not that we have more ambulances normally because we have a lot of ambulances involved in transportation for intrahospital treatment and transfer; it is because an ambulance service is also an emergency service. If you have an emergency service, it is because you need it.

These answers we have had today and last week and the week before last make about as much sense as saying: "Well, we don't very often need more than two fire engines and we could reduce the number of fire reels we have in a particular geographic area. We could reduce the number of firefighters we have. The public is not at risk because we don't need them all the time. When we need them, we'll call them in from surrounding areas."

The truth of the matter is that where we are talking about life-threatening situations, whether it is fire protection or emergency ambulance service, there simply is not the time to call them in from surrounding areas. It is the time I am talking about. It is the time I have been talking about from the very beginning of this strike 117 days ago.

If this ministry's staff under this Liberal Minister of Health is advising her that the response times are adequate and that there is no risk to the public, to use her own words, then I think we have a very sad situation indeed, because we obviously have a ministry staff that does not see its responsibilities fully.

There has to be risk when there is not a response time that is within the normal range.



The normal range in urban areas for emergency response with ambulances, I understand, is seven minutes. Having lost a friend in September where the ambulance response time was 14 minutes, I know from personal experience that it is a matter of life and death. It is not being dramatic to say that. It is demonstrating a lack of responsibility, unfortunately, on the part of staff that has been asked to monitor this situation in Mississauga and Halton. I suppose I am astounded that I am the only person, along with my colleague the member for Burlington South, who is standing in this House asking these questions.

We have had calls from people who are apprehensive about the fact that if there is an emergency, they do not know what is going to happen. One area that seems to have been missed completely by this ministry is a major emergency. A major emergency on a large scale could be at Lester B. Pearson International Airport, which falls totally within the city of Mississauga. I want to tell the minister that when we had the last air traffic accident at Mississauga, it took 180 ambulances immediately to transport the people who survived that accident and needed medical attention.

We just do not have that number of ambulances at our service now because the management who are driving the reduced number of vehicles in Halton and Mississauga simply cannot cover it, even with support from Metropolitan Toronto and surrounding areas. That air-fatality accident called in ambulances from all the Metro areas, and that was when everybody was driving.

Last week, we saw something like 85 or 90 ambulance driver attendants sitting in this Legislature. The Minister of Health welcomed them. At that time, I said I would be far happier not to see those drivers in our public galleries, that I would be far happier to see them on call driving those ambulances.

I have a question to the minister on one other subject related to ambulance service. It is on the subject of who gets what equipment, because I understand that the government-operated ambulance services—by the way, I should say at this point that I think all ambulance services should be government operated. I do not believe in private ambulance services if there is a differential in the level of service for patients around this province. I understand there is a differential in the level of equipment in those ambulances and in the condition of the ambulances themselves. I understand new vehicles and new equipment go to government-run ambulance services.

I am wondering if the minister could confirm whether it is true or false that private ambulance services do not get new vehicles and new equipment, but get vehicles passed down from government-operated services?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** As I mentioned to the member earlier, in fact we now have a co-ordinator for emergency health services in the ministry. Requests from across the province are considered both on a provincial and on a regional basis. They are distributed based on the priority attached to them.

For the information of the member, when it comes to emergency planning, I have some information that perhaps I could share with her. The existing operator has five ambulances that are fully staffed. At most times, there are no more than would be available to handle emergencies before the strike, since the other six vehicles available at peak periods are normally engaged in routine transfers from hospital to hospital. Although the vehicles and the crews are moved around to provide maximum coverage, two operate primarily out of the services station in Mississauga, and one each out of Oakville, Burlington and Milton stations.

The ministry's central ambulance communications centre in Mississauga is responsible for dispatching the nearest ambulance in response to an emergency call. I think it is really important the member should know, in response to her specific question, that the answer is that it is false, that all vehicles are rotated to all services, that emergency coverage in the area she refers to specifically is being maintained using vehicles and crews from services in the surrounding area, as required, and that extra support for the Mississauga area is being provided by other private ambulance services, particularly in Streetsville, as required.

**1600**

As I have mentioned, we are also monitoring the provision of ambulance services in this area to ensure there is no risk to the public during this strike situation. There are likely to be some delays in nonemergency situations and hospitals may and are using alternative means of transportation in nonemergency situations.

I think it is important we acknowledge this is a difficult time. However, it is inappropriate for the ministry to comment on negotiations that are ongoing between the employer and the employees.

I think that when we talk about the ambulance services, it is most important, not only in ambulance services specifically but also in

emergency health services across the province, to acknowledge that what we have in place is a very fine service and to recognize that resources are allocated based on our setting priorities based on a rational planning process.

**Mrs. Marland:** I think the record should note that the minister obviously was just handed some material from her staff and that what she has just read into the record is from her staff. I am not laying blame on her for the content, but I think it is singularly significant when her staff tells her that it is inappropriate to comment on ongoing negotiations in this labour dispute, because what I am telling her is that there has been one meeting in three months, so she cannot talk about ongoing negotiations. I would not even feel so badly if the negotiations were ongoing, but one meeting three months ago is not ongoing negotiations to resolve this labour dispute.

Since the minister has just read beautifully the ambulance coverage in Halton and Mississauga and is told by her staff that they are monitoring the response times, I just have one final question for her: Is she satisfied with the ambulance coverage in Halton and Mississauga for emergency calls?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** I have been assured that the public is not at risk and that emergency service is being maintained. I share and I hear from the member her concern and her frustration. I want her to know that frustration is shared, of course, by everyone, regardless of where they sit in this Legislature, but I want her to know that I have been assured the public is not at risk.

**The Deputy Chairman:** Has the member for Mississauga South now completed her questions?

**Mrs. Marland:** I yield.

**The Deputy Chairman:** We have first on my list the member for Mississauga West.

**Mr. Mahoney:** I would just like to ask a couple of questions and make a very brief comment in response to some of the comments from the previous questioner.

I can assure the minister that—

**The Deputy Chairman:** Just a minute.

**Mr. Mahoney:** I have a question to the minister.

**The Deputy Chairman:** The member for Mississauga West is recognized for the purpose of asking questions related to the topics raised by the member for Mississauga South. We have further supplementary questions on the same subject from the member for Windsor-Riverside (Mr. D. S. Cooke).

**Mr. Mahoney:** That is fine. I have questions on that issue. It is just that it was suggested no other member from the Mississauga area had asked any questions and I wanted to ask the minister a couple of questions.

I recently met with representatives from the union, as did other members of the Liberal caucus. A number of questions were raised with regard to the Shapiro report, particularly with regard to recommendation 3 in the Shapiro report, which recommends that a pilot project be established in a region. I wonder if the minister could tell me if she has had an opportunity to consider that recommendation and to consider possibly using the region of Peel as the region for the pilot project?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** The member has raised this matter with me and I am familiar with the recommendations in the Shapiro report. As he knows, I met with Mr. Shapiro, although briefly, to discuss his report and some of his recommendations. I am aware ministry officials are presently reviewing that report and are discussing, with those regions that might be interested, his suggestion regarding a pilot project.

**Mr. Mahoney:** One further question to the minister would have to do with the numbers she recently read into the record and the levels of service. There have been conflicting reports with regard to the numbers, both from the union and from some staff, on which my office has attempted to get clarification. Exactly how many ambulances were available prior to the strike on a 24-hour basis and how many crews would be available over that 24-hour period, specifically in the Mississauga area, although it may be necessary to broaden that scope to include Mississauga and Halton?

I wonder if the minister would be able to clarify the actual numbers today, or if not, to bring a report back so that I could then tell my constituents, who have also expressed concern over the length of this strike, what the actual numbers are in relation to the ability of the services to respond to emergencies on an ongoing basis.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** As I have said to the member, and to any member in this House on that kind of specific and detailed question, I would be very pleased to provide the member, in writing, with the details in response to the question he has asked today.

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** We have obviously had these types of disputes in Ontario before and we get the same type of answer from this minister



and previous ministers that we have had all along.

Regarding private ambulance services in this province, as I understand it, the ambulances are owned by the Ministry of Health, the uniforms the drivers and attendants wear are owned by the Ministry of Health, and the budgets are submitted and approved by the Ministry of Health. Really, the only involvement of the private operators is that they provide the administration for these services. The purse-strings are entirely and totally controlled by the ministry.

I would like to ask the minister what role she feels she has at the bargaining table, as the real power person behind whether there is going to be a settlement in this dispute or any other dispute that occurs in ambulance services across the province?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** As I have said on numerous occasions, the negotiations are ongoing between the employer and the employees. The Ministry of Health is not at the table.

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** The minister cannot just slough it off in that way. She cannot say a private operator exists; she owns the ambulances, she controls the purse-strings and she has to approve the budgets, yet she says she has absolutely no responsibility.

While she might not be sitting at the bargaining table, the fact of the matter is, she is there. She could settle the strike. She could become directly involved as Minister of Health because she controls the purse-strings. The minister knows she has that power. She knows she has the responsibility as Minister of Health. What role does she feel she should be playing as Minister of Health when these negotiations are taking place, not just in this particular instance but in others?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** In response to the member, it might be helpful for him if I told him that there are a number of different types of services around the province. There are 65 private, 66 that are run by hospitals, 29 that are volunteer-based, four that are municipal, three that are run on a contract basis and nine that are run directly by the ministry. As I mentioned before, there is a total of 131 hospital-based and private ambulance services in the province. The member is also aware that we have received a report from Mr. Shapiro regarding—

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** Mr. Chairman, this is not the question I asked. I watched the Minister of Health last week when specific questions were asked of her during these estimates, and she just wandered on by reading notes. I do not want to have her notes; I do not want to have her

statistics. I was Health critic for this party for a number of years and I have heard all those statistics before.

What I want to ask the minister is, what responsibility does she feel she has when disputes like this occur where people's health is put at risk and where she sits back and says, "I am not at the bargaining table. It is a private operator. It is up to the union and the private operator," when in fact she controls the budget? When is she going to accept the responsibility and understand that she is a real partner in finding a solution to this dispute? When is she going to get involved?

1610

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** The reason that I appreciate the opportunity through estimates to give responses to the questions from members of the House is so that I can clarify in some detail those questions that perhaps during question period do not lend themselves to a fuller and longer response.

In fact, the member, as a previous Health critic for his party, would know that when it comes to mediation, it is the Ministry of Labour that would be involved in an attempt at mediation between a private employer and employees, and their union specifically, and that the Ministry of Health is not involved in mediation; nor are we involved in negotiations, particularly in services or in transfer payment agencies.

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** If the minister refuses to accept any responsibility for the health care of people in this province, and that is exactly what she is doing—I mean, when it comes to hospitals in the province, she throws up her hands when there are complaints and she says, "There is nothing I can do; there is a private board." When it comes to ambulance services in the province, even though she carries the entire financial responsibility for that service, she throws up her hands and says it is not her responsibility—I do not know what her motive is in becoming Minister of Health.

I would have thought that a person like her would want to get in and become Minister of Health because she would want to make some change to improve the system. Instead, what she has developed into is a very good note-reader in the Legislature, a reporter and a defuser of issues in the Legislature, but nothing in terms of fundamental change in the Ministry of Health. I think this dispute in the ambulance service is a good example.

I want to ask her something that has been raised at the Ministry of Health estimates on

ambulance services year after year after year, and that is the fact that we do have a mixture of services. We have municipal; we have for-profit private operators; then we have the ones that are run directly by the Minister of Health; and then we have some that are volunteer agencies. The issue has been studied to death and recommendations have been made time and time and time again about rationalizing ambulance services in this province. When is the minister going to be prepared to not accept the status quo and to bring in some fundamental changes so that there is a rationale and not a hodgepodge of services all across this province?

Former governments recognized the problem. Every year in estimates her predecessor, the member for Bruce (Mr. Elston), used to say: "We are studying it. We are studying it. We are studying it." I think the taxpayers of this province are sick and tired of hearing from her and her predecessor that they are studying the issue. When is she going to introduce some change to the system to rationalize ambulance services in this province?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** In fact, I have some concern because the member for Windsor-Riverside, in standing in this House, I think suggests that one of the strengths of our system of delivery of health services is unacceptable to him. I would say that I do not agree with his hypothesis that the boards of our hospitals, who are transfer payment agencies, are not fulfilling a very important role. In fact, transfer payment agencies, whether they be hospitals, community-based organizations, are the ones that accept a level of accountability for the services which are funded by the ministry. In the same way—

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** This is not the way that we can proceed in estimates if the minister wants to attempt to distort what other members have said. That is not what I said at all.

Hospital boards will in fact accept their responsibility. What I want her to do is to accept her responsibility. She is the Minister of Health; she is the one who funds these agencies, and when there are problems, she has to accept responsibility.

We are specifically talking about ambulance services, and my question was, when is she going to stop studying the irrational method of delivering ambulance services across this province and when is she going to follow recommendations that her own ministry personnel have made on many occasions to bring in reform, eliminate the hodgepodge system we have now and bring in something that is uniform across the province?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** I would have to say that if we check the record in Hansard, the member opposite referred to the transfer payment agencies, of which hospitals and community-based organizations are two of many that provide the services. In fact, the Ministry of Health funds those services.

One of the things I have said repeatedly in numerous speeches across the province is, in fact, that over the years, the Ministry of Health was established as an insurance company, where the services were expected to be provided. One of the things that I have said repeatedly in this House is that I believe it is important for us to have a level of accountability and quality assurance for those services that we fund.

The member would be interested to know that at the present time, following the appointment of an emergency health services co-ordinator, we are considering a new legislative framework that would be for emergency health services across the province. I am hopeful that we will have an opportunity at some point in the future to discuss that new legislation, which I think even he might approve of.

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** Just to finish, let the record show that we are now in the third year, going on the fourth year, of a Liberal government, and in the first year that it took office, the former Minister of Health said that the method used to deliver ambulance services across this province is irrational and that they were going to study it and make changes.

Now, what the minister has said is that she is continuing to study it, and some time in the future there will be changes. That just is not good enough; that is not good enough at all. Emergency health services are not provided adequately and equally across this province. If she does not bring in change, then she is the only one who can be held responsible when people do not get the proper type of care, as in the instance in the Peel area.

Instead of learning all of her cues and her lines in the Legislature, maybe what the minister should attempt to do is to make some fundamental change in the system, which just simply is not working. She is doing nothing to change it to make it work better for the patients of this province.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** I disagree with the member opposite. In fact, we have made progress in a number of very important areas across the province. We can spend some time enumerating where I believe we have acted most appropriately to bring change, and fundamental



change. In fact, he sees before this Legislature a new piece of legislation to expand community-based services across this province. I can tell him that, in fact, our commitment is to respond to what I have referred to in this House on a number of occasions as the three irresistible and compelling forces for change: the economic realities, the changing demographics and the impacts of technology.

I do not think there is any place where we see greater opportunities in technology than in the provision of emergency health services. We are beginning to see the kind of computerization and sharing of information through our central dispatch bed registries, which I think are responding to a tremendous challenge of geographic diversity.

I am not sure that we will ever have the situation in this province where we determine that what is right for northern Ontario, where they rely on air ambulance services extensively, is exactly the same as in an urban area in southern Ontario. That is what makes Ontario so unique. We have the ability and the flexibility to respond appropriately and to make the most rational and effective use of our resources as we respond to the very different needs of the people of this province.

**Mr. Hampton:** It is with a great deal of pleasure that I take part in this estimates discussion, because I have a number of questions that I would like to address to the Minister of Health and a number of matters that I want to put before the Minister of Health, not that they have not been put before her before—in fact, they have—but it seems that you have to hit the same nail five or six times before you get some attention on it.

1620

It is not unusual that we on the opposition side of the House come to the House and hear the minister say over and over again that Ontario has a world-class health care system second to none and that it is wonderfully managed, it is a rational health care system with rational management. But what we see in northern Ontario is anything but a rationally planned health care system, it is anything but a world-class health care system, it is anything but a second-to-none health care system. In fact, in many situations it is becoming a very sad and serious health care system.

Just to emphasize that point, I want to refer to some comments made by a couple of northern Ontario physicians, physicians who are well respected both by their peers and by the communities they serve in. I want to refer first to

a Dr. Denton of Kirkland Lake and then to a Dr. Moulton of my community, Fort Frances, who have spent a great deal of time advising the minister and the government as to how they might better promote health care in northern Ontario communities.

One of the comments that Dr. Denton makes—and this is, by the way, an article that appeared in Ontario Medicine last fall, October 1987, entitled Problems in Training Doctors for the North—is basically:

“The situation in some northern communities could become desperate. Doctors in the north are doing the best they can, but they can only do it for so long. In some instances, people who need specialists can be referred away from their towns. But in other cases, such as family doctors wanting the backup of obstetricians in the event of complications, it is just a matter of time before a major disaster happens. In my books, obstetrics is unsafe in my community of Kirkland Lake at the moment, because we do not have the backup.”

“The manpower problem in northern Ontario is not new, but,” according to Dr. Denton, “is getting worse.” He says that when he first moved to Kirkland Lake 10 years ago, there were two obstetricians; now there are none. There were two general surgeons; now there is one. And the town’s only ophthalmologist has left. Like many other northern communities, his community also suffers from a lack of psychiatrists. He points out: “Now the government plans to cut back on residency positions over the next five years, there is a worry that the north will face a further shortage of family doctors able to do anaesthesia.”

That is one doctor pointing out the seriousness of the situation. The list is much longer and much more serious than just the problem of doctors. The minister refers over and over again to the fact that the northern health travel grant program is a wonderful solution to many of the problems we have and that the northern health travel grant program has done so much to alleviate some of the pressing health care needs in northern Ontario.

Over the past 12 months, I have sent to the Minister of Health numbers of northern health travel grant applications that have been turned down by her bureaucracy, and turned down for a number of reasons that most of us in northwestern Ontario—and I think we probably can speak for the rest of northern Ontario—but most of us in northwestern Ontario, in any case, cannot understand.

To give the minister an example, if you live in communities like Kenora or Red Lake or Dryden or Sioux Lookout or Fort Frances or Rainy River, any of these communities in the far northwest corner of the province, your family doctor, if he needs to refer you to a specialist, will likely refer you to Winnipeg, for a number of reasons: first, because transportation to Winnipeg is easier than it is to Thunder Bay or to Toronto; and second, because most often there is better or more specialist care or a greater variety of specialist care available in Winnipeg than there is in Thunder Bay.

They make these referrals in the knowledge, quite often, of whom they are referring their patient to. They are acquainted with the specialist in Winnipeg. They know what kind of work the specialist does, so they know what kind of service is going to be provided when the patient is referred.

The patient goes to Winnipeg, sees a specialist or sometimes sees someone who is practising as a specialist although he or she does not have all of the documentation that a specialist might ordinarily have. The patient gets back to his or her community, whether it be Kenora, Dryden, Red Lake, Ear Falls or Sioux Lookout. The patient finds that he or she has been rejected for a northern health travel grant. Why? Not because the specialist did not provide the patient with good medicine; not because the person referred to in Winnipeg did not look after the patient; not because he or she did not incur all kinds of costs in going there—none of those reasons.

The patient is refused a northern health travel grant because the person who was practising as a specialist in Winnipeg or the person referred to in Winnipeg who acted as a specialist lacked some particular piece of paper that is required in Ontario. Because that person lacked the particular piece of paper that is required in Ontario, the northern health travel grant is not provided.

If ever there was a case where bureaucratic nonsense gets in the way of good medicine, this is it. Yet the Ministry of Health refuses to do anything. The Ministry of Health simply says: "Those are the rules. That is the way it is."

I want to ask the Minister of Health today, and I would like an answer to this: When this is the least-cost alternative, when good medicine is available, when it is far cheaper to send someone merely three hours or two hours away to Winnipeg than to ship the person all the way to Toronto, which is at least a day's travel involving expensive air flights, why can the Ministry of Health not accommodate people of northwestern

Ontario and change the northern health travel grant system so that this simple kind of justice is provided? Why can the bureaucracy not be changed?

That is one example. We have all kinds of other examples. In most small communities in northern Ontario, you will find that dentists do not do a lot of dental surgery. The reason they do not do a lot of dental surgery is first and foremost that they may not do it often enough. If they do not do it often enough, they do not feel entirely secure in doing a particular type of dental surgery three or four times a year. They do not feel secure in doing it. They are not certain that their patients will be getting the best medicine or the best treatment available. Finally, they are a little bit concerned about their liability. Naturally, they refer their patients to places like Thunder Bay, Winnipeg, Sault Ste. Marie or Sudbury for the more serious types of dental surgery.

When a person is referred from a town such as Longlac, Terrace Bay, Gogama, Hearst, Dryden or Red Lake to one of these larger communities for serious dental surgery, another unbelievable bureaucratic complication takes place. If the dental surgery takes place or is conducted in a hospital, then the patient qualifies for a northern health travel grant. But if the same surgery is not done in a hospital, if it is done in the dental specialist's office, the patient does not qualify for a northern health travel grant.

I ask the minister to explain that one to people who have to travel 300, 400 or 500 miles to obtain serious dental surgery that, if not obtained, would surely mean the person would have to go in hospital, at the very least costing the province \$400 a day for time in hospital. I want the minister to explain why it is that if the surgery is conducted in a hospital, the person qualifies for a northern health travel grant, but if it is not conducted in a hospital, the person does not qualify for a northern health travel grant.

In either case, it is medical treatment that eventually will save the province some money, because if the person does not go to see the specialist, we both know that he or she is going to wind up in the hospital and is going to cost the province more money. This is preventive medicine at its best. Yet because the province gets into these silly bureaucratic mixups, people are denied the care, and their physical and health situation deteriorates even further. I would like an explanation of that.

**1630**

As the minister knows, I and many of my colleagues conducted a tour of northwestern



Ontario last spring and a tour of northeastern Ontario this fall. We talked at first hand to many of the people in the communities. One of the absolutely appalling things is that there are people who are so ill, who are handicapped, who are aged, who are young children and are referred elsewhere to see a specialist and have to have someone accompany them in their visit to the specialist. This often means that someone has to take time off work.

The guardian or the person who travels with the patient has to take time off work or has to incur significant travel expenses. Yet, time and time again, the Ministry of Health has referred the applications for a travel grant. We have situations across the north where people are being denied needed specialist medical treatment, because the person who might be guardian for them is denied the opportunity and travel grant moneys to enable him to travel with the patient.

We have examples of blind people, handicapped people, people who are aged, all these examples. Yet the minister's bureaucracy continually turns the applications down as if the people in need should somehow try to shuffle the papers again, as if that might help them somehow to get the care they need.

The northern health travel grant program is a good program. These are serious and valid questions that need to be answered. These are problems with the program that need to be addressed. I know somewhere within the Ministry of Health there is the myth that if one deals with these problems, the northern health travel grant program will become so loose that it will be abused.

I have been told that by doctors who are very close to the Ministry of Health and by doctors who are very active in the Ontario Medical Association. Yet those same doctors tell us that the instances of abuse of the northern health travel grant program are so minute and so few that the myth that the program is going to be abused has no basis whatsoever.

I cannot understand, and people all across northern Ontario cannot understand, why the Ministry of Health has not acted to take care of some of the documented problems with the northern health travel grant program so that the people who need it and have to have it get some sort of justice from it; a justice that is well deserved. But let me leave the northern health travel grant program for a minute, because it is, though one of the most serious, certainly not the only problem we face.

I spoke earlier and I quoted Dr. Denton's comments in Ontario Medicine. I want to go back to that, because as the minister knows, one of the most serious problems we have across northern Ontario is the lack of doctors, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech pathologists—the list goes on. The minister has told us time and time again that the government's underserved area program is the answer to all of these woes; that it takes care of northern Ontario's problems with the lack of health care professionals.

I want to refer to the article in Ontario Medicine again, because it sums it up. Dr. Denton, from Kirkland Lake, says that in his view of the underserved area program: "I would like to see the underserved area program do a better job. I would like to see more attention paid to it. The fact of the matter is that it is not meeting the needs".

He says he has found a number of doctors go north for the three or four years in which they get a grant. As soon as their three or four years of grant are used up, they head back south. That is his estimation, and, as I said, he is a well-respected professional. He is a well-respected physician in northern Ontario and he is well respected by his colleagues at the Ontario Medical Association.

But he is not alone. One of the things we did in a follow-up to our tour is that we wrote to many of the municipalities and we asked them: What is your estimation? This is from the corporation of the Township of Ear Falls, a community that has enough difficulties without having a further difficulty of not being able to find enough doctors. This is the clerk-treasurer of the town responding. He says:

"I have given some thought to your request for my views on the underserved area program in recruitment and retaining medical professionals in the north.

"Ear Falls has participated in the underserved area program tour since its inception"—and they have been able to find some doctors. "The incentive grants definitely do induce a few doctors to come north. It does seem, however, that the number of professionals in the program is in no way keeping pace with the demand.

"As more communities obtain underserved status, because more and more communities need the underserved status, the problem only gets worse. Our past experience with doctors and dentists has been that, once the incentive grant has expired, it is time for them to move on, this in spite of the fact that their incomes here are very high.

"We are in the situation where we have to provide below-market-cost housing; we have to provide below-market-cost office space, and we have to provide below-market-cost equipment, all these things in addition to the grants, in order to get the needed medical care professionals." His conclusion is that the underserved area program is, at best, a Band-Aid solution. You get doctors for three years, and then they move on.

But let me go further. Let me give you an example of Dr. John O'Sullivan, someone who has practised medicine in the community of Emo for 24 years. His comment is simply this: In his 24 years, he has seen 21 doctors move through the community on the underserved area program. They come out of medical schools, they get their first couple of years of grants and they say: "Goodbye. Thank you very much."

To me, these things suggest that the underserved area program is not doing the job that is necessary; it is not meeting the needs. If the minister needs any greater illustration, all she needs to do is look at the list of areas designated as underserved for general practitioners in December 1987 and see the list of communities: Armstrong, Blind River, Cochrane, Dryden, Dubreuilville, Elliot Lake, Emo, Englehart, Fort Frances, Geraldton, Hearst, Hornepayne, Ignace, Iroquois Falls, Kapuskasing, Kirkland Lake, Manitouwadge, Marathon, Matheson, Moose Factory, North Bay.

She should look at it in 1987 and then look at it again in 1988: Armstrong, Cochrane, Chapleau, Dryden, Dubreuilville, Elliot Lake, Emo, Fort Frances, Geraldton, Hearst, Hornepayne, Ignace, Iroquois Falls, Kapuskasing, Kirkland Lake, Marathon, Mattawa, Matheson, Moose Factory, North Bay, Rainy River, Pickle Lake and so on.

Six months later, she will see the same communities. I could read for her today the November report or the October report of this year and she would see the same communities. The shame of it is that in the interim, in the 12 months that have passed since December 1987, what has happened in some of these communities is that they have got a doctor, but the doctor may have stayed six months or nine months, taken some of the grant money and moved on.

The underserved area program records that as a success. It records that as a placement. That shows up in the minister's statistics as a doctor placed, a community satisfied. Yet only eight or nine months later, the community is again looking for a doctor. How much more evidence do we need that this program is a Band-Aid

solution that does not work? How much more do we need?

**1640**

Let me give the minister the example of one community, however, and I think she knows the community I am going to use because I have raised it so many times in the past: the community of Rainy River. The people of Rainy River is so fed up with the underserved area program that they hope it goes somewhere and gets lost. They have found that the underserved area program has not helped; it has hindered.

They have gone through all the recruiting tours. They have wine and dined medical school students at Hamilton, at Kingston, here in Toronto, at London, in Ottawa, and they have been told: "Well, if you can't get one simply by going on the tour, why don't you offer them free housing? Why don't you offer them a free office? Why don't you offer them a free car?"

This is a community that has a higher than 20 per cent unemployment rate, and 67 per cent of the people who live in the community are senior citizens on fixed incomes. They are supposed to delve into their pockets to help the underserved area program bribe somebody to come and do the job. How much more evidence do we need?

Finally, when the town of Rainy River became totally upset with the underserved area program and decided it had to go outside the country to find a doctor, it found a doctor in the United States who was fully licensed, had 12 years of practice behind her, who in fact had special ability in terms of obstetrics and was willing to practise obstetrics, was willing to come to the town of Rainy River, was willing to work in the town of Rainy River.

But do you know what the town of Rainy River found when it tried to get Dr. Batman from Philadelphia into the country? It found the underserved area program did not help it get through the hoops of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario, did not help it get through the hoops of the Ministry of Health and did not help it get through the hoops of the Ontario Medical Association. The underserved area program was actually a hindrance. The underserved area program did not help at all. In fact, if anything, it placed more roadblocks in the way of the community.

I want to ask the Minister of Health if she really believes, with this kind of evidence, that the underserved area program is doing the job. Does she really believe it is doing a satisfactory job? Is it not time that the government sat down and very seriously looked at alternatives to the



underserviced area program? Something that provides more than a Band-Aid solution, something that does not say to communities which are already on their economic backside: "You have to come up with more money out of your public treasury if you want a doctor. You have to come up with more grants and more bribes if you want a doctor."

What is amazing in all of this is that in fact there are alternatives. Alternatives have been suggested by different health care organizations and different health care advocacy groups. I want to refer to some of those alternatives which have been suggested, because to not refer to them I think is to give only half the picture.

In March 1988, the Ontario Medical Association's special committee on northern affairs issued its report, in which it made several recommendations. One of the things they said is, "In the interim, the underserviced area program must continue to be an integral part of any northern Ontario health care strategy." They said it has to be there for a while. But then they go on to the really key suggestions.

They said: "Appropriate residency training is necessary to meet the particular demands of medical care in the north and to encourage graduates to practise in the north. The Ontario Medical Association wants to discuss various approaches to this problem." In other words, if the minister wants to do something about the serious problem in northern Ontario, there is a need for more residency positions in northern Ontario, not less. Yet the Ministry of Health has cut residency positions and is in the process of cutting them.

They said that "The feasibility of establishing chairs in multidisciplinary departments of northern health studies must be explored." In other words, the minister has to do more in the education process.

They said, "An allowance should be established to subsidize northern physicians for continuing medical education." Again, if the minister wants people to practise in northern Ontario, it is not enough just to have the underserviced area program; she has to do more ongoing medical education in northern Ontario.

These suggestions go on. What has the ministry done to respond to any of these recommendations? It is now seven months. The need is critical. What has the ministry done to respond to any of the recommendations made by the Ontario Medical Association's special committee on northern affairs?

They are not the only people who have come forward with recommendations. The minister knows that, because she received a copy of a report entitled *The Expansion of Family Medicine Training in Ontario*. It is a report issued by the chairpersons of family medicine in the five Ontario medical schools: the University of Ottawa, Queen's University, the University of Toronto, McMaster University and the University of Western Ontario.

The educators have advised the minister on what needs to be done. The educators have said there are some realistic, specific things she can do to ensure that a better quality of medicine is practised across northern Ontario. Let me just read some of these recommendations, because they hit the point right on.

Recommendation 5: An Ontario-wide three-year residency called the northern and rural program in family medicine, which should accommodate 24 trainees in each year of training in northern and rural family medicine, is recommended.

Recommendation 6: A proposed northern and rural program would begin operation in year one of expansion and take three years to reach maturity, after which time it would take an annual output of 25 positions. This program will be a three-year course with additional skills being taught, additional skills that are needed in northern Ontario communities."

Recommendation 7: These family physicians should be capable of carefully defined specialty substitution skills in such areas as anaesthesia, operative obstetrics, intensive care and emergency medicine, geriatrics and paediatrics.

Recommendation 9: Such a program will be the joint academic responsibility of the five medicine departments and will be centred, believe it or not, in northern Ontario.

In other words, even the medical educators are saying you cannot do all the education of doctors in southern Ontario and then ship them north and expect them to know how to handle the situation. A realistic training program has to be centred in northern Ontario.

Finally they say, Where certain special areas of concentrated experience and supervision are required, the trainees may be seconded to southern teaching hospitals or family medicine teaching units, but the geographic home base of those accepted into the northern and rural program in family medicine will be understood to be in the north.

They go on to cite no less than 24 recommendations as to how better medicine, better training of doctors for northern Ontario can be provided.

I want to ask the minister, given that the chairpersons of family medicine in the five Ontario medical schools have told her what is needed, what has her ministry done to address this report? How has she responded? What concrete steps has she taken to meet this serious need and to address these very worthwhile recommendations which have been put to her by the chairpersons of the five medical schools?

Just dealing with the underserved area program and the better training of physicians for northern Ontario does not cover the map either. The minister has said we have a rational health care system, that there is rational planning going on in the health care system. I have a number of questions about that. Permit me to refer to my own home community because I know it best. Let me give the minister an example.

There is a very dedicated physician in Fort Frances, and the minister knows him because his name appears in many of the reports that come to her desk: Dr. Moulton. He sent to the ministry a proposal to set up a day hospital program in the hospital, a program that would facilitate elderly people, chronically ill people who do not need to be in the hospital, who can be at home and with some assistance from home care can reside at home, coming to a special clinic where they could receive attention not only for their medical needs but also for their mental health, emotional and social needs.

It would be a very inexpensive program to fund and it would save the Ministry of Health literally hundreds of thousands of dollars because it would be a preventive program. It would be aimed at keeping those elderly, chronically infirm people out of the hospital, keeping them in their homes; and yet her ministry turned down the proposal. It seems that her ministry would rather see these people in the hospital in acute care beds at \$400 a day than provide this very inexpensive, well-planned program, which, I might add, has been tested and shown to work. Her ministry would rather see these people in the hospital than see them out of the hospital receiving inexpensive preventive care.

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Why the ministry turns down these proposals I will never know. Why the minister insists on spending more money in acute care beds, why she insists on spending more money on the most expensive elements of hospital care and not on better preventive care I do not understand.

That is only one example. Let me give the minister the example of home care, and we have given it to her before. Across Ontario, but specifically across northern Ontario, she has thousands of dedicated home care workers who are providing the kind of home care that allows someone to remain in his home and, again, permits us to not put him in the hospital. Yet her ministry, through the decentralized system of contracts that it has, pays these people, maximum, all of \$6.02 an hour. I have examples of people who have worked in home care for 18 years. For 18 years they have given dedicated service in this program and, after 18 years, her ministry provides them with no benefits whatsoever other than Canada pension and it pays them the grand total of \$6.02 an hour.

The other tragedy of this is that most of these people are women. This is another ghetto for underemployed and underpaid women, and yet her ministry continues to sanction it. It continues to say, "We have no more money for it." Yet she knows very well that the work these people do in home care keeps many people out of the hospital. As I say, acute care beds in the hospital cost \$400 a day, at the very least. Again, I would like an explanation as to why this is so, why her ministry continues to do this when it makes neither financial sense nor health care sense.

Let's step, just for a moment, into the question of community mental health. Again, I will use the examples from the north because I think they are the most extreme. We have the Lakehead Psychiatric Hospital in Thunder Bay, the one psychiatric institution in northwestern Ontario. It is a very expensive place to send people, because we start talking about bills of \$500, \$600 a day, not just \$400, and because the community mental health service in so many smaller communities across northern Ontario is so inadequate that we end up having to send people who have mental health problems time and time again to Lakehead Psychiatric Hospital at \$500 and \$600 a day when they could be cared for in their own community much less expensively and, I would argue, given much better care. Yet the ministry refuses to fund some of the most necessary community mental health programs.

Again, I can give an example from any community across northwestern Ontario, because we talked to the community mental health directors in almost every one of those communities and they all said: "Give us one more psychiatric nurse, give us one more social worker and we will be able to save the Ministry of Health hundreds of thousands of dollars, because we



will be able to provide the necessary treatment that so many members of these communities require. We will save them from having to be sent to the Lakehead Psychiatric Hospital, where the care is indeed very expensive."

Again, I will give the minister a concrete example. The community mental health program at Fort Frances is an excellent program. It provides counselling in alcohol abuse; it provides family counselling and counselling in terms of family violence. What it wanted last year was one more clinical specialist to make the mental health program complete. I believe what it asked for was \$50,000. It was ranked number one by the district health council in terms of priority, and yet her ministry turned it down. Why, when she can save money? When she can increase the efficiency and the effectiveness of the community mental health process, why does she turn these programs down?

Let me take it one step further. Everyone we spoke to in the area of community mental health has said to us: "If you want an effective community mental health program, get it out of the hospitals. Put it on the main street. Put it in the places where many of the emotionally ill and many of the people who have emotional problems will feel comfortable and somewhat easier about approaching the facility or approaching the service. Do not bury them in the basement of the hospital. Do not put them behind four corridors of doors in the hospital. Put them on the main street."

We want to see some action on that. In all of those communities across northern Ontario that have some very serious community mental health problems, we have yet to see her ministry move the community mental health programs out of the hospitals and on to the main street, where they are so needed.

Does the minister know what? I bet the rent would be cheaper; the rent would probably be cheaper in the downtowns. I will tell her why. Ear Falls, Kenora, Rainy River, Atikokan, Ignace, Longlac: Look at how many of the communities across northern Ontario where economy is not booming. There is available space downtown that she can rent for many of these facilities. She can save her ministry some money. Again, why has she not moved?

Finally, I want to deal briefly with the question of native health care. When we did conduct our tour of northwestern and northeastern Ontario, it was very sad indeed to see the situations in so many of the communities. I only invite the minister to look at the infant mortality rates of

many of our native communities; I invite her to look at the life expectancy statistics of many of the native people who reside across northern Ontario and see how much shorter it is than the white population's. She should look at the morbidity rates. She should look at them all. If she is not shocked and saddened by what she sees, then I myself will be a very surprised individual. The fact of the matter is that we do not provide anywhere near the quality of care for our native people that is needed. Yet her ministry and the federal Department of National Health and Welfare keep bouncing native people back and forth like ping-pong balls, as if their needs somehow can wait for a later date.

The really sad thing about this is that, again, dealing with so many of the problems that native people face would not cost a great deal of money. I want to give the minister just one example that her ministry and the federal government have kicked around as a ping-pong ball that could save the government in general, I would argue, a lot of money, and provide all kinds of efficient and effective health care. I am talking about the native nursing program at Lakehead University in Thunder Bay.

The federal government has provided some basic purse-string funding for the native nursing program, and it has worked. I will tell the minister why it has worked. In the past, the federal government would go out on a recruiting program every year. It would go to England, the United States and several other countries, and it would spend hundreds of thousands of dollars recruiting nurses to work and live on remote native reserves. After one year, those nurses would leave. The federal government would go out again and spend all kinds of money recruiting, and again, after one year, those nurses would leave.

#### 1700

The native nursing program has said: "No; let's get the horse before the cart. Let's take native people. Let's take them to Lakehead University, let's train them in nursing and then let them go back to their native communities, where they want to work." The program has been successful. It has saved money. Yet the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of the Attorney General and the federal Department of National Health and Welfare have kicked this program around as though it is a ping-pong ball and somehow it can wait until doomsday before it gets adequate funding.

I want to ask the minister, why can her ministry not take the lead role? It is our

estimation that it would cost \$300,000 a year. It should take the lead role. If she has to, the minister should embarrass the federal government. It would be money incredibly well spent. But she should not treat the health of the native people like a ping-pong ball the way it has been treated and is continuing to be treated.

Last of all, let me give the minister another example of what is irrational about our health care system, totally irrational. It is not just in Toronto that we face tragic waiting lists for needed surgery. We have people across the north who are awaiting heart transplants, who are awaiting surgery for the replacement of joints who have waited a year and, after waiting a year, are being told by the doctors who have referred them, "You're going to have to wait even longer."

It has got to the point where we have people from northwestern Ontario who are going to Calgary to receive the needed surgery because they cannot wait any longer, because the tension of waiting, the nervous anxiety of waiting for the heart transplant or the pain of waiting for a joint transplant is totally beyond what they can bear in the future. So they mortgage the farm or they sell the car or they sell the truck, whatever they have, and they pay their own expenses out to Calgary to get the needed surgery. How can this be a rational health care planning system? How can it be?

**Mr. Haggerty:** We have doctors from Alberta coming to Ontario.

**Mr. Hampton:** Not any more. We are not going to have it because the Minister of Health has said—and I want to refer to the question, because I almost forgot about this—that she is going to restrict doctors who want to move here from other provinces and other countries. She may be thinking of the impact of that on southern Ontario, but has she thought of the impact of that on northern Ontario communities, where we cannot get enough doctors as it is? Has she honestly thought of the impact of that? What may save costs in southern Ontario may mean lives in northern Ontario. That is what it boils down to. Again, if the minister wants me to, I will quote for her the comments made by Dr. Denton and Dr. Moulton, because that is what they are saying. They are saying we are just waiting for a disaster to happen in some of these places.

Just a last reference to the rational planning of our health care system: I do not think it is a rational system. I think that in some cases it has been subjected to the most irrational and desperate kinds of political abuse. I want to refer again to my own home community. As the

minister knows, the hospital in my community, La Verendrye General Hospital, has been desperately seeking to operate a larger intensive care unit because it is needed. We have a number of senior citizens, we have a number of people who suffer from industrial accidents. To get the intensive care unit, they need some provincial funding.

The minister says it is a rational system, but I wonder how it is that I can write to the former Minister of Health and he can write back and say: "No, the consideration of funding will take at least a year. It will have to go through all of the rational steps before it can be addressed." It was a year ago in the summer, June 1987, that I wrote to the former Minister of Health. He said, "It will take at least a year before we can determine if funding will be available for the intensive care unit and how much will be available."

Then, lo and behold, on Labour Day, September 1987, three days before election day, the Liberal candidate in my riding goes to a Labour Day rally and says, "I have just learned that funds are available for La Verendrye hospital's intensive care unit beginning in April 1988."

**Mr. Villeneuve:** Playing politics with health.

**Mr. Hampton:** Playing politics with health, exactly.

In northern Ontario we are used to the former Tory government promising a highway to get elected. We are used to that. In fact, we used to say with the former Tory government that you could plan on the highway being reannounced three times. Every highway had to last three elections.

**Mr. Villeneuve:** But it got built.

**Mr. Hampton:** All right, but no one before this has ever tried to use the health care system. No one has used the promise of a hospital or the promise of hospital facilities in northern Ontario as a cheap attempt to get elected. This is the first time we have ever seen it, and what is so sad about it is that in so many of those northern Ontario communities, better health care facilities are desperately needed.

On the one hand, we have the Minister of Health saying, "The rational health care process will take at least a year to deal with this system." Yet three days before the election, the Liberal candidate stands up and says: "The funds are available. The intensive care unit will go ahead. Everything has been approved." But then after the election, what happens? Her ministry says: "Sorry, the funds are not available. It has not been approved."



Now, does that sound like a rational health care system to members? Does that sound like a health care system that is trying to meet the needs of Ontarians on a rational basis? It does not. It sounds as though health care is being used as a political football. If that is what it needs to get elected, then that is what this government will use it as, and I say shame on the minister and shame on her government.

Do not try to tell me this was not known by the Liberal Party, because I see those people who were running the campaign in my community walking up and down the halls here at Queen's Park every day. Do not tell me that political people from Queen's Park were dispatched to Rainy River to run the campaign and yet no one down here knew that this kind of promise was being made. That just will not sell.

I ask the minister again, that does not sound to me like a rational health care system. It does not sound to me like a compassionate health care system. It sounds to me like a health care system that is being used, unfortunately, in a very political way. I am very sad to see that happen, very sad.

I have put a number of questions to the minister. I hope she will take the time to answer them. I will put her on notice now. If she does not answer them today, those questions will be asked again and again, because the problems are not going away. They are getting worse and they are getting seriously worse. If the minister wants, I can bring letters from more town clerks and more clinic administrators from all across northern Ontario to tell her how bad it is getting, so I hope the minister will take the time to answer some of those questions.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** There was agreement with the Health critic that there were a number of people who wished to have an opportunity to place their questions on the record today. I agreed we would do that, and so I will yield the floor to those who want to continue making sure their questions get on the record.

**Mr. Villeneuve:** I have several questions that will not be new to the minister. The minister has heard them before, but I want to try to pry some information from the minister and the ministry to help some people throughout Ontario.

Cystic fibrosis has been brought to the attention of this Legislature on a number of occasions by myself and a number of my colleagues. I know the minister has suggested and, I believe, has put into effect a study that I do not believe is required. For some cystic fibrosis adults, there is a very real penalty in living

beyond the age of 18, because so many supports previously available to those people are no longer available once they turn 18.

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In Ontario, individuals with cystic fibrosis and families with children who have CF have to pay for all their CF medications unless they are eligible for the Ontario drug benefit plan. Adults with CF must be on public assistance or must have a very low income with almost no assets in order to qualify. Otherwise, a person must turn to his or her own resources just to survive.

Frequently in the past, arrangements have been made through hospital pharmacies that permitted persons with cystic fibrosis to receive medication from the hospital pharmacy on a free or almost free basis. Many adults with CF formerly paid only a nominal sum for their medications due to the subsidy from the hospital pharmacy, but will now have to pay and meet all the costs of their CF medication unless they pass a means evaluation test conducted by the hospital.

Action is needed now in order that these problems do not continue. Those already grappling with the heavy demands of CF, this terrible illness, deserve much better, living in a province with the resources and the budget the Ministry of Health presently has. For example, a young man earning \$5.50 an hour has been told he does not qualify for any assistance through the provincial drug benefit plan. He is not eligible for a drug card because he has assets of some \$3,000. He has been told that if he disposes of his cash assets by liquidating them or spending the money, he may be able to get a drug card. However, this party agrees that this type of decision is made on grounds that really do not provide personal dignity to the people who really need government assistance.

Private insurance is not the answer. Some families, particularly those with young children, have excellent private health coverage, yet such coverage often has a total dollar ceiling. Once the ceiling is reached, coverage ceases. As one young woman in her 20s explained, she received a memo from her personnel department stating that since she started with the company two years earlier, she had submitted a total of \$11,800 of prescriptions and the lifetime maximum covered only \$10,000.

We have a major problem. Minister, we do not have many CF patients over 18 years of age. It would cost the government a pittance when compared to the expenditures that are made, and possibly compared to the expenditure that will be

required to complete a study. Many private health policies explicitly exclude medication that may be purchased without a prescription. Cystic fibrosis digestive enzymes fall within this category. Residual funding from the Ministry of Health may be required by individuals with cystic fibrosis covered in part by private health plans.

The solution is provided within this study by the Canadian Cystic Fibrosis Foundation: "The crisis confronting individuals with cystic fibrosis in Ontario is a relatively simple one to solve. It is one which we believe is fiscally responsible and humanly compelling," states the CF foundation.

Simply stated, individuals with CF should continue to have their drugs dispensed through the hospital pharmacy associated with their local CF clinic. These medications should be paid for through the Ministry of Health without a means test. In this way, there would be no vast burgeoning of drug costs; rather, the mechanisms of current practice would be continued without the enormous stress of evaluation, re-evaluation and the ability to pay. Dignity would be preserved and the public purse would not be violated while we are dealing with people who desperately need some moral and financial support from their peers and from this government.

It is worth noting that adults with cystic fibrosis who are in the workforce are largely ineligible for life insurance and quite often suffer the added burden of planning their families' financial security knowing that they face complete disability, and indeed, an early death. This is an issue that haunts the lives of all individuals with CF who are fortunate enough to have reached the age of majority and are still living today. So I certainly urge the minister to have her ministry complete its study as quickly as possible and get to the root of the problem, which is providing funds for those young people beyond the age of 18 who have CF.

Another concern was raised by the Canadian Nurses' Association. They have brought a number of questions to the fore that remain unanswered. I would certainly like the minister to address some of the concerns that the Canadian Nurses' Association, the CNA, has brought forth to her and to the different caucuses within this province. Many of the concerns surround the wording of a document that members of the Ontario Nurses' Association, the nurses of Ontario, will have to abide by. Certainly, whenever we have a profession that has 50 per cent more or less of its members who do not

practise actively on a full-time basis, we have a major problem.

Finally, on the problem of chelation treatment, I have written to the minister earlier on this very controversial subject. It is one that is difficult to understand for a layperson such as myself. However, I can assure her I have met with a number of my constituents who are presently receiving chelation treatment and I can tell her that they not only believe it is assisting them but several of them have told me that were it not for chelation treatment, they would probably not be alive today. I trust that the ministry is looking into the possibility of allowing chelation treatment.

I know the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario has made some decisions that, based on its knowledge, it has found it difficult to accept it as a treatment for other than lead poisoning. However, I believe the ministry, in concert with the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario, should be looking at this again in the light of some of these people. I must tell the minister I cannot think that all these people who are receiving the treatment now can be wrong, and they are receiving it from medical doctors within the province.

I could bring forth many other concerns I have regarding hospital funding, ambulatory services, etc. However, I believe my colleagues will be touching on those. These are the areas that concern me personally: cystic fibrosis, chelation treatment and the fact that I do not feel our very dedicated nursing profession is receiving the remuneration and consideration it should be receiving from the ministry.

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** I am not sure how we are proceeding. Rather than let everything pile up, I would like to ask the minister a couple of questions and have her respond now. That is how I am used to doing the estimates debate.

**The Deputy Chairman:** On that point, the understanding I just had from the Minister of Health was that the Health critics of the parties agreed to put their questions together first and she would respond after all the questions were in. Is that correct?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** That is the discussion I had today with the critic for the third party, who is here today. He has already placed numerous questions on the agenda. He asked that members of that caucus be permitted to place their questions, after which time I would have an opportunity to respond.

**Mr. Eves:** I am quite happy to allow the member for Windsor-Riverside to proceed with



his few questions, if that is the way he prefers to proceed.

1720

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** First of all, I would like to have the minister respond regarding the section of the Nursing Homes Act that was passed that provides for financial accountability. It has been raised in the Legislature a couple of times by our Health critic.

I would like to ask the minister why it is taking so long to bring in financial accountability. As the minister will be aware, more than \$300 million a year of taxpayers' money goes into private nursing homes in this province and still, as of today, there is no requirement for financial accountability so that the taxpayers, the residents and family members of residents can find out how those nursing homes are spending our money.

As the minister will know, the amendment to the Nursing Homes Act that was passed during the minority government time provided for an annual statement to be posted. I remember negotiating that section of the Nursing Homes Act with the Minister of Health at the time, as it was my amendment. We came down on the side of giving very little in the area of provision for regulations, and putting all of the requirements in the act.

The reason we did that at that time was because the bureaucrats in her ministry said that if it was spelled out clearly in the legislation, then the nursing homes could simply be expected to comply with the legislation and there would not be a requirement to go through a whole regulatory process; it could be done quickly. Now, here we are, a year and a half later and we are told everything is being held up on the regs.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** A number of questions have been raised regarding nursing homes. One in particular was raised by the critic for the third party. Perhaps it would be appropriate now for me to answer those questions that have been raised, not only by the critic for the third party but by the member's Health critic and himself, and deal specifically with the issue of nursing homes during this estimates process.

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** I would prefer that—

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** I have the floor now, Mr. Chairman.

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** I have asked one question. I did not ask that all questions on nursing homes be answered. I asked a question about financial accountability.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** I think it is appropriate if at this time I respond to those questions that have been raised about nursing homes, and I would be pleased to start with the question that was raised. In fact, my colleague the member for Riverdale (Mr. Reville), also asked—

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** On a point of order, Mr. Chairman.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** —“When will the minister ensure that financial statements of nursing homes are posted and can she give us a date for the regular”—

**The Deputy Chairman:** Order, please.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** Oh, I am sorry.

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** I just want to make it clear that I am not here to listen to all the answers to all the other questions on nursing homes. I have put a specific question on financial accountability, and I have a few other questions. That is how I would like to proceed. I think that is fair. The critics who asked the other questions on nursing homes will have them answered in the appropriate way the minister has agreed to before.

**The Deputy Chairman:** We seem to be meeting an impasse here. The member is not satisfied with the answers that are being given to specific questions, and he therefore has only one prerogative in my view and that is to ask further questions. He cannot direct what answer the minister is required to give.

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** But it has to be on financial accountability.

**The Deputy Chairman:** We are dealing with questions pertaining to consideration of the estimates. The questions are being put to the minister and if one is not satisfied with the answers given, one continues the questioning for the allotted time for the estimates.

**Mr. Harris:** Mr. Chairman, on the point of order: I think the member has a few specific questions he would like some answers to. As for the critic for the official opposition, I do not see anything out of line. The critic for our party has indicated he is happy to defer answers to his questions for this particular period of time. I think it is normal in the estimates process to ask a few specific questions. If he cannot get an answer to one, it is tough to ask the follow-up question.

I would also suggest, in the interest of time, that if the minister wants to get written answers or wants to check with staff and everything else, she can table those answers after the estimates are finished. But there are some specific questions, as I understand it, which I have heard the critic place and I do not see anything the matter with

that, unless there is other pressing business that the critics say is more important.

**The Deputy Chairman:** As I have indicated, the minister answers as she sees fit. If you are not satisfied with that, then you continue the questioning.

**Mr. Harris:** Mr. Chairman, let me try one more time and say that if a critic asks a specific question and the minister answers, "Well, cats go here and dogs go here," I would say that is totally irrelevant to the proceeding. If the minister says, "I don't particularly want to answer you, but I'll do something else," that is fine; that is her prerogative, to refuse to answer.

**The Deputy Chairman:** I appreciate the member's representation, but we do not have a standing order that compels the person answering the question to give an answer satisfactory to the questioner.

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** On the point of order, Mr. Chairman: I am not trying to make this complicated. The minister, in response to my question on financial accountability, said she wanted to give all the answers to questions on nursing homes that have been asked during the estimates. I do not think that is appropriate. I think it is appropriate, since there has been a question put on financial disclosure, that we address the issue of financial disclosure and not all the questions that have been put with regard to the issue of nursing homes up to this point. I do not think that is fair. I think that is an abuse.

**The Deputy Chairman:** As I have indicated, there is nothing that can compel anyone to give an answer you think you are entitled to.

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** So at the mention of the words "nursing homes," she can answer any question that has been asked in the past two weeks?

**Mr. Harris:** Mr. Chairman, there is nothing stopping us from dispensing with the answers to all the other questions. We have suggested that for the rest of today we dispense. If she wants to answer them, we are saying dispense. Let's not waste our time and let's get on to the only question we want the answer to, the one asked by the member for Windsor-Riverside. If she does not want to answer it, she can say, "No, I do not want to answer it." She should not start talking about something else.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** It seemed very appropriate to me at this time. Since another question had been asked around financial statements by the critic for the official opposition, it seemed it was reasonable to respond. However, I am pleased to

respond to the question of the member of the official opposition and to tell him that the regulations under the Nursing Homes Act are currently being reviewed. They are expected to be ready by the end of this year.

He will note that the ministry has consulted widely, both with professional accounting bodies, the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Ontario specifically, and the Ontario Nursing Home Association. It should be noted, however, that some nursing homes have in the past sent copies of their audited report for the year. Even though they were not bound at that point by regulation to do so, they have done so. I know we are anxious to have the regulations circulated and then in due course they will be passed by the cabinet regulations committee and be available for the member to review.

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** Could I ask the minister why it is so complicated to develop regulations with regard to financial disclosure that it has taken us a year and a half to come to the point where we might have regulations by the end of the year. Then it will have to go through the cabinet process and it will probably be another few months before they are put in place. What has made it so difficult for the ministry to develop these regulations and why is it taking so long?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** Regulations are often complex. One of the things we have committed to is an open process of consultation during the drafting of regulations and/or legislation and/or policy decisions. I want to assure the member that the draft regulations under Bill 176, An Act to amend the Nursing Homes Act, are in the process now of being circulated for discussion among interested parties. I am hopeful we will see those available early in the new year for implementation as expeditiously as possible.

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** Just a final point on this: I am asking specifically with regard to financial disclosure. What are the issues around this that have made it so complicated that we have not been able to implement something that was central to the Nursing Homes Amendment Act?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** I am sure when the member has an opportunity to review the regulations in their final form, his question will be answered for him; when he has a chance to see those regulations, which are sometimes quite complex.

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** What the minister is saying is that she does not know, that her bureaucrats will answer it and that when we see the



regulations, we will understand why it is so complicated.

I would like to move to a local issue with regard to your riding, Mr. Chairman, and mine. I raised this matter in question period a couple of weeks ago. The minister was not fully aware of the development of the chronic care hospital down in the Windsor area, but I am sure she is familiar with it now since she has had a couple of weeks' notice.

I met with the new administrator of the hospital a couple of weeks ago and I must say I was very pleased with the approach I think he is taking. I want to ask the minister what she and her ministry are prepared to do to speed up this process of the development of a new chronic care hospital in the Windsor area. As she will understand, the current facility that is being used was a school. It was converted to a chronic care facility. I believe it is 70 some-odd years old. It is totally and completely inadequate.

1730

This chronic care hospital has been our number one health care priority for the last number of years. The first proposal to come forward for a new chronic care hospital was in 1971. In the 1985 provincial election, the member for Windsor-Sandwich, the now Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations (Mr. Wrye), promised that if a Liberal government was elected, the sod would be turned by the fall of 1985. It is now almost December 1988. The sod has not been turned. We do not know when the new hospital will actually be constructed. Even if the sod is turned next spring, we will be looking at 1990 or 1991 as the earliest that those chronic care beds will be put on stream. What is the minister prepared to do to make sure that decent health care is provided for the chronically ill in our area and to speed up this process, which has simply dragged on for much too long?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** As I know the member is aware, there is actually a seven-stage capital planning process which all projects are subject to. It is quite a lengthy process and I know that at times it can be quite frustrating for communities that do not understand what that process is. It involves the announcement from the ministry of the intention to plan for future facilities. As I have travelled the province, I have heard from a number of communities their view that in fact that process is a difficult one for them, because at any stage in that process the concern about the change in the overall cost or the scope or the operating implications is addressed with the ministry.

We are at the present time reviewing our capital planning process, as well as projects that are out there, to make sure that they are appropriate to the needs of communities in the future as well as today. We respond to what we all believe is the goal, and that is to allow people to remain independent in the community for as long as possible. That is what seniors are telling us they want. However, when they do require institutional care, those services are available for them.

I have said to the member, as I have said to others in this House, that if he has specific questions about the status of a specific project, I am always pleased to get him an update and let him know where in our seven-stage planning process that project is.

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** Of the seven stages of the planning process, this particular hospital is at stage 175. It has been going on for much too long. What the minister should do if she wants to get herself educated about the problems of health care in our area is to visit the current chronic care hospital. She should ask herself whether she would want a family member of hers to be in that current facility.

I am not talking about the staff, because the staff does the best it can with the facility that exists. It is simply inadequate, and we need to have the process speeded up so that the sod will be turned and the new hospital will be under construction.

All I am asking the minister is the same thing that the member for Windsor-Sandwich asked the former Minister of Health, Mr. Norton, back when the Conservatives were in power, and that was for direct intervention by the Minister of Health to see that the process was speeded up and the hospital was constructed.

I am simply asking the same thing of the minister that her party's local member in Windsor asked of former ministers of health. I think that because this is a real difficulty and a real problem, the minister should make herself aware of the problem, just as former ministers of health had to do, because the history involved in this hospital is a unique one that requires intervention from the Minister of Health.

Specifically, I would like her to look at when the costs come through for what is now going to be a redesigned chronic care hospital. We had a hospital designed and now the hospital board has changed the plans. It is going to construct it in a different area of the hospital site.

I would like the minister to look at the new costs that it will be coming in with and I hope that

the ministry will provide the capital funds that are required over and above the \$22 million that has been allocated by the ministry, based on the original plans. As I understand it, they were just not properly thought out and the costs were inaccurate. Now we will have an accurate figure. I hope the minister will commit herself to the two-thirds portion that the ministry normally does on capital so we can get going with this hospital.

I just ask that she look into the matter specifically, become familiar with it and get the thing moving. It is a desperate need in our community. I know that I speak not only for myself, but for all three members for the Windsor area.

I would like to just touch on one other area that I do not think has received proper addressing by any members of the Legislature. That is the whole issue of what this province is doing for people with acquired immune deficiency syndrome. I would like to congratulate the minister. I remember when we had discussions on this a number of years ago in the Ministry of Health estimates. We were putting concerns to her predecessor about the lack of health promotion. I want to congratulate the government. I think in the area of health promotion, we have come a long way in Ontario. In many ways this province and this jurisdiction is showing a lead in the area of health promotion.

I certainly think the provision of funds for Casey House Hospice Inc. was a substantial commitment by the province. I think it was over \$2 million a year and it was appropriate. There were capital costs involved. The province needs to be congratulated on that, as well. But there is one area that is a very much overlapping jurisdiction. I think what the minister has to do is show some leadership for the nation.

The federal government, with regard to the introduction of drugs for use in Canada to fight this disease, is very lax. The minister will know, I am sure, that doctors in this community write prescriptions for a drug called, I believe, aerosol pentamidine. The drug is not available here in Ontario, so that persons with AIDS goes from Toronto, or wherever, to Buffalo to pick up the drug. Then they can come back to Toronto because the doctors can administer the drug in their offices.

At least it is available, but the minister must have concerns, as I do, that not everybody has equal access because of the cost involved in the travel and so forth. I know that this is a matter in which there is jurisdiction with the federal

government, but obviously the federal government is not sensitive to this whole issue, or sensitive enough. I do have, at the end of this, a suggestion that I seriously hope the minister will consider.

Another drug that the minister might be aware of is dextran sulphate, which people are going to Japan to pick up and bring back here, or ordering from the Caribbean and having mailed back into Canada. Again, the drug has been shown to have some positive effects and should be available here. It is only available, as I understand now, in a few clinical studies. People do not know whether they are getting the drug or a placebo. You cannot get it unless you meet certain criteria.

There is a real problem with access to therapeutic drugs that are available to fight the disease. It is absolutely ridiculous that your access to the drug could depend on which doctor you have, which hospital you go to and how much cash you have, so you can get it from foreign jurisdictions. One other use of a drug that is available in this country is azidothymidine. The minister will know that because of the standards that are being used on whether someone will have access to that drug, there are actually people who get access to the drug, cut down the dosage that they take, stockpile the drug and then it is shared. I would not call it a black market, but it is being shared because other people cannot get access to it.

The only point that I am making is that access to therapies to fight the disease are really hit and miss in this country. I have read some articles and heard speakers from the United States who say very clearly that the attitude that is being taken in the United States is that this is a manageable chronic disease, that with proper access to proper therapeutic drugs, in most cases the various symptoms, whether pneumonia or cancer or whatever the spinoff disease the PWA experiences, can be fought by the use of a variety of drugs and certain types of diseases can be prevented by use of certain drugs.

1740

If our federal government is not moving quickly enough, and it is not—many more drugs are available in the United States and used regularly—I think it is incumbent on the minister to show some leadership, since she represents the largest province with the largest number of PWAs. I would suggest that one of the things the minister could do is to call a national conference of health ministers across this country where she sets the agenda and leads on some of issues, so that she as Health minister can show some



leadership, involve some other health ministers and certainly involve the federal health minister, to try to get across some of the concerns that I think have been expressed to the minister on many occasions by groups across the province and here in Toronto that are working with PWAs.

I would ask the minister that she seriously consider this proposal and start putting some heat on Ottawa to make some of these drugs available through hospitals and through doctors' offices, so that people here in Ontario and in Canada can have the same access to some of the therapeutic drugs that are readily available in most jurisdictions in the United States. I am talking about drugs, of course, that have been tested and have shown some therapeutic value.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** I am pleased to respond to the issues which the member for Windsor-Riverside has raised. To briefly respond to the first issue which he raised, on the Windsor Western Hospital Centre, I want him to know that I am aware of the situation. The hospital, as I understand it at this point, is at the functional planning stage. They have been asked to rework some of the functional plan as it was submitted to the ministry. I think he is aware of that. I have some concern that, when the communities across the province submit plans which are changed in scope or nature or are more costly than that which was originally announced by the ministry, they must understand that we receive an allocation from the Treasurer (Mr. R. F. Nixon) and we then proceed to see that those resources are distributed on as equitable a basis as we can, recognizing that where the costs come in within what was anticipated and do not require additional resources, certainly that would be something the ministry would look at.

I am always concerned when I see costs rising over those which were anticipated. In our review of the capital planning which is being done in the province, as well as in our capital planning process, that is something which we will be reviewing specifically, because I know how frustrating that can be for communities. However, I would repeat again that I am always happy to get information for the member for Windsor-Riverside or any member of this House on where in the planning process a specific project might be.

The member, in his second question, addressed the issue of AIDS. I have described AIDS as being the public health challenge of this generation. In fact, we have two primary goals in responding to the AIDS epidemic. The first is to stop the spread of the human immunodeficiency

virus infection and the second is to provide compassionate and effective medical care for those suffering from this disease. From his remarks, I think that he and the other members of the Legislature present would agree that those are the correct priorities.

I want to thank him for acknowledging the prevention and the promotion strategies of the ministry. I am pleased to say that I believe we have taken a major step in ensuring that we have achieved my own personal objectives of enhanced health promotion opportunities and prevention strategies, as well as the third, which he knows I stated a year ago was the expansion of community-based services.

I believe our response to AIDS has been a very important and aggressive one. We have an extensive education program which I know the member is aware of and which has been very effective. We have been monitoring it from the beginning of that program. It is a \$7-million multimedia information program which includes a provincial hotline. The whole program is designed to give people the information they need, to give them a telephone number that they can call if they want more specific and explicit information. It is designed to dispel the myths and the results of that program which, I want the member to know, in fact are achieving our goals.

There are a number of other areas where we have been particularly active and involved. In fact, there are two advisory committees. One is OPEPA, which is the Ontario Public Education Panel on AIDS, which was struck by a previous minister to identify educational and information needs. The other group is PACA, the Provincial Advisory Committee on AIDS, to advise the minister on public health concerns, and this is a panel of experts.

At this point in time the province has spent over \$20 million, and that does not include treatment dollars which have been submitted under the Ontario health insurance plan by physicians. That is over and above program dollars.

It is estimated that the cost of drugs and treatment for a single AIDS patient annually is in the neighbourhood of—I am not sure if it is annually—but the estimate for hospitalization, home care, drugs and tests for a single AIDS patient is approximately \$200,000 per year.

Increased funding to expand our facilities, so that we could have appropriate levels of testing, has taken place; and in fact the azidothymidine trials to which the member alluded, at a cost of \$1.7 million, were funded by the Ministry of

Health to respond to the drug trials within the community.

The member is quite correct in saying that we funded Casey House Hospice Inc. at some \$2.3 million, as a facility to respond to the needs of terminal AIDS patients. As well, there has been significant community-based funding for organizations out in the community, to attempt to reach those groups which are hard to reach, to offer them counselling, support and moneys for local health units, as well as for community-based groups in our efforts.

I want the member to note as well that there are significant research dollars being spent here in Ontario, some \$2.75 million to date on AIDS research, and I believe what is particularly important and significant is the fact that we have some five outpatient hospital clinics which are responding as well.

The member raised specifically the issue of access to drugs and to new drugs. One drug in particular that I think he referred to was the aerosol pentamidine. I think it is important for him to know that that drug, as well as all new drugs, is controlled by the federal government and it is the federal government's responsibility to license and permit drugs to be made available in Ontario and in Canada. In fact, the federal government is liberalizing the access to new drugs in controlled studies here in Ontario and across Canada.

The member should know that this week we will be hosting an AIDS working conference here in Toronto. We have invited 150 participants from providers, community groups, activists, those who want to come together, professionals as well, to discuss treatment in Ontario and also to discuss the next step.

When I was in Saskatoon at the conference of provincial health ministers, I invited other provincial health ministers who wished to come to attend this working conference. I extended the invitation to them. I understand that some will be attending, others will be sending representatives if they wish and having representation there, so that we can share our experience and share our information with our sister provinces across this country.

There will be federal representation as well at the conference, and in fact it is really important to note that the federal government does have responsibility for the drug trials and ultimate approvals in this country.

I want to tell the member, as I said, that I believe our primary responsibility is to stop the spread of AIDS, to respond to the need for

effective, compassionate and timely treatment for those who are suffering from this disease. It is the goal and the responsibility which I am attempting to respond to, I believe in very appropriate ways.

I want the member to know that the resources we made available are significant and yet there is much to be done. It is the reason I attended the conference in Stockholm, Sweden in June.

1750

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** I know it is. Could I ask a supplementary question? I want to specifically get at the issue of availability of drugs. The other things the minister has mentioned I think are appropriate. I know them. I should not even have mentioned them. I should not have praised her because then that meant she was going to run through the whole gamut.

I want to ask the minister if she thinks it is appropriate that we say in Canada that you cannot have access to the aerosol pentamidine and get the drug here but that a doctor will write a prescription and you can drive to Buffalo and get it. All I am trying to point out is that the therapeutic value of that drug and dextran sulphate and some of the other drugs which are widely used in the United States has been proven. I am not suggesting they are cures for the disease, but they certainly have had proven therapeutic effect. Yet they are not widely available in Canada.

I understand that it is a federal responsibility. I am simply asking the minister, as a minister who represents Ontario, where the largest number of PWAs or persons with AIDS exist, why she could not consider some representations to the federal government in the strongest way possible.

One of those avenues would be through a national conference of health ministers on the whole issue, specifically on the availability of drugs, which I would say is the number one issue in terms of the lobby groups or advocacy groups which exist in Ontario, the people who advocate on behalf of people with AIDS. The minister has got to recognize that that is the number one issue and she, as minister, could play a very positive role in the whole area.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** I think it is very important when we discuss this issue to recognize that we would like to see that drugs are made available to people with AIDS in a timely and appropriate manner as soon as the effectiveness of those drugs are determined. We also have to acknowledge that we in Ontario are part of a great federation called Canada and that we play an



important role. As I mentioned, the conference we will be holding this week will have representation from across the country as well as federal representation, and I know this very issue will be discussed.

I believe it is very appropriate for the federal government to show leadership on this very important issue and on an issue which is of concern to people across this country, not only in Ontario. I am hopeful that with the representations which perhaps will come from the conference and the working group of invitees, some 150 I mentioned who are getting together this week, they will be able to discuss that issue and others, because I know that access to new drugs is something which is of great concern to people with AIDS, to their friends and to their families.

As AIDS touches each and every one of us, as a friend or as a family member, it will be important that we know we are doing everything we can both to stop the spread of AIDS and to give people the information they need to protect themselves. We know that when you are dealing with AIDS, it is behavioural. It has nothing to do with who you are; it is what you do. Therefore, it is extremely important that people have that information. The other thing is that once someone has this disease, our response, both in being compassionate and in providing effective medical care, is extremely important.

As the hour approaches six o'clock, there is one short question that was posed by the critic for the third party at the start of estimates. I know that everyone is always interested in events in the minister's office. I thought I would be pleased to place on the record the statistics regarding staffing in the minister's office in the few minutes that we have left, since I think we have

dealt with the last question that was raised by the member for Windsor-Riverside.

I see the critic for the third party and would like to respond to his question of November 14 when he asked how many people are on the minister's staff and what their salary ranges are. I would be pleased to read into the record that there are 10 people presently on the minister's staff in the office of the Ministry of Health. The minister's secretary, Sheila Starkman, has a salary range between \$29,120 and \$39,520. The executive assistant is Paul Pellegrini, with a salary range from \$52,000 to \$71,760.

There are three special assistants: Jennifer Cole, Frank DeFelice and Jim Maclean. The salary range for special assistants is \$35,000 to \$52,000. There are five general assistants—Duncan Armstrong, Debi Fisher, Lawrence Knox, Cheryl Timko and Pankaj Varma—with a salary range of \$18,720 to \$33,280. As well, there is one special assistant, policy, a woman by the name of Sandra Lane. She is on secondment from the ministry. She is a civil servant providing very good advice to me as Minister of Health at this time. She is paid out of the budget of the office of the Assistant Deputy Minister of Health, planning and programs, as she is a civil servant and on secondment from the ministry.

I believe that is the response to the question that was asked by the critic for the third party regarding staffing in the minister's office. I am pleased to have the opportunity to place that on the record at this time.

On motion by Hon. Mrs. Caplan, the committee of supply reported progress.

The House adjourned at 5:59 p.m.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS IN ORDERS AND NOTICES

PRIVATE BIBLE COLLEGES AND SEMINARIES

**322. Mr. Jackson:** Would the Minister of Colleges and Universities provide, for each private, degree-granting Bible college or seminary in Ontario, the following information: (1) annual revenue, (2) annual expenditures, (3) assets, (4) number of classrooms, (5) number of library books relating to programs offered by the school, (6) enrolment, (7) number of full-time salaried faculty, (8) number of faculty hired part-time or on temporary contract, (9) number of faculty offices for full-time faculty, (10) whether there is provision of office space for part-time faculty, (11) whether there is a cafeteria and if so the particulars thereof, (12) sections of the institution's charter which reflect community involvement in governance of that institution, (13) the amount of annual community financial support, expressed either in absolute dollars or as a percentage of annual revenue; and if for any institution this information is not immediately available would the minister provide in lieu thereof the information on which her ministry based its decision to support an application for a charter from that particular college or seminary? [Tabled June 2, 1988]

See sessional paper 417.

ONTARIO DRUG BENEFIT PLAN

**337. Mr. Reville:** Would the Minister of Health provide the number of claims and amount

paid for drug cost for each of the subgroups in the Ontario Drug Benefit Formulary, broken down by single-source and multiple-source categories, totalled, and the corresponding percentages of total Ontario drug benefit drug costs and claims? [Tabled June 20, 1988]

See sessional paper 416.

HOSPITAL FUNDING

**341. Mr. Reville:** Would the Minister of Health provide a list of all grants for expansion provided to Sunnybrook Hospital in the current and last fiscal years? [Tabled June 20, 1988]

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** The following are the capital grants paid for expansion by the ministry to Sunnybrook Medical Centre during fiscal years 1987-88 and 1988-89:

Capital grants paid 1987-88: clinical services, \$290,000; chronic care facilities, \$279,368; total, \$569,368.

Capital grants paid 1988-89: chronic care facilities, \$152,440.

Total, \$721,808

**342. Mr. Reville:** Would the Minister of Health provide details of capital and operating expenditures on teaching hospitals and on nonteaching hospitals for the current and previous fiscal years? [Tabled June 20, 1988]

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** The capital and operating expenditures on teaching hospitals and nonteaching hospitals for the current and previous fiscal years are as follows:

	Teaching	Nonteaching	Totals
1986-87	\$1,970,369,531	\$2,772,655,725	\$4,743,025,256
1987-88	2,145,309,642	2,978,719,227	5,124,028,869

Capital grants

	Teaching	Nonteaching	Totals
1986-87	\$90,261,891	\$148,132,960	\$238,394,851
1987-88	42,109,463	127,508,075	169,617,538

USE OF GOVERNMENT AIRCRAFT

**385. Mr. Jackson:** Would the Minister of Education provide details of all travel by F. Porter on government-owned or government-leased aircraft during the period August 1, 1987,

to December 31, 1987, inclusive, including (a) date of each flight, (b) origin of flight, (c) destination and (d) purpose of travel? [Tabled November 7, 1988]

**Hon. Mr. Ward:** F. Porter, acting regional director, northwestern regional office.



Date of Flight	Origin	Destination	Purpose
Sept. 30–Oct. 1/87	Thunder Bay	Pickle Lake	Accompany education officers on exchange from Australia visiting NW regional office and remote school at Summer Beaver.
Sept. 14–16/87	Thunder Bay	Pickle Lake	Observe conditions education is delivered to students in remote communities.

**386. Mr. Jackson:** Would the Minister of Education provide details of all travel by A. Gouthro on government-owned or government-leased aircraft during the period August 1, 1987, to December 31, 1987, inclusive, including (a)

date of each flight, (b) origin of flight, (c) destination and (d) purpose of travel? [Tabled November 7, 1988]

**Hon. Mr. Ward:** A. Gouthro, education officer, northwestern regional office.

Date of Flight	Origin	Destination	Purpose
Sept. 30–Oct. 1/87	Thunder Bay	Pickle Lake	Accompany education officers on exchange from Australia visiting regional office and remote school at Summer Beaver.
Sept. 14–16/87	Thunder Bay	Pickle Lake	Observe conditions education is delivered in remote communities.

**387. Mr. Jackson:** Would the Minister of Education provide details of all travel by M. Larratt-Smith on government-owned or government-leased aircraft during the period August 1, 1987, to December 31, 1987, inclu-

sive, including (a) date of each flight, (b) origin of flight, (c) destination and (d) purpose of travel? [Tabled November 7, 1988]

**Hon. Mr. Ward:** M. Larratt-Smith, assistant deputy minister, corporate planning and policy.

Date of Flight	Origin	Destination	Purpose
Sept. 14–16/87	Thunder Bay	Pickle Lake	Observe conditions on how education is delivered to students in remote communities.

**388. Mr. Jackson:** Would the Minister of Education provide details of all travel by R. Houghton on government-owned or government-leased aircraft during the period August 1, 1987, to December 31, 1987, inclusive, includ-

ing (a) date of each flight, (b) origin of flight, (c) destination and (d) purpose of travel? [Tabled November 7, 1988]

**Hon. Mr. Ward:** R. Houghton, assistant deputy minister, learning services.

Date of Flight	Origin	Destination	Purpose
Dec. 1–2/87	Toronto	Sudbury	Meet northern regional office management teams.

**389. Mr. Jackson:** Would the Minister of Education provide details of all travel by L. Jones on government-owned or government-leased aircraft during the period August 1, 1987, to December 31, 1987, inclusive, including (a) date

of each flight, (b) origin of flight, (c) destination and (d) purpose of travel? [Tabled November 7, 1988]

**Hon. Mr. Ward:** L. Jones, regional co-ordinator.

Date of Flight	Origin	Destination	Purpose
Dec. 1-2/87	Toronto	Sudbury	Meet northern regional office management teams.
<b>390. Mr. Jackson:</b> Would the Minister of Education provide details of all travel by Mr. and Mrs. W. Newton on government-owned or government-leased aircraft during the period August 1, 1987, to December 31, 1987, inclusive, including (a) date of each flight, (b) origin of flight, (c) destination and (d) purpose of travel? [Tabled November 7, 1988]			
<b>Hon. Mr. Ward:</b> Mr. and Mrs. Newton.			
Date of Flight	Origin	Destination	Purpose
Sept. 30-Oct. 1/87	Thunder Bay	Pickle Lake	Education officers on exchange from Australia to central Ontario regional office visiting northwestern Ontario regional office and remote school at Summer Beaver.

INTERIM ANSWERS

**391 to 394. Mr. Allen:** Hon. Mr. Sweeney—A full response cannot be prepared within the time period outlined in standing order 88(d). A full response will be provided on or about January 4, 1989.

RESPONSES TO PETITIONS

NATUROPATHY

Sessional paper P-1, re naturopathy.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** Under the new legislation which is being developed to govern the health professions, naturopaths will be allowed to provide care to the people of Ontario as unregulated practitioners. As is now the case, naturopaths will not be able to use certain modalities of treatment such as surgery or prescribing drugs licensed to other practitioners.

In the future, naturopaths will have opportunities to have their regulatory position re-evaluated to determine if they meet the criteria. They have made submissions to the health professions legislation review. The review is currently evaluating these new submissions.

RETAIL STORE HOURS

Sessional paper P-7, re Sunday shopping.

**Hon. Mrs. Smith:** The government has concluded that municipalities should have the option to decide retail hours on Sundays and other holidays and has introduced legislation to accomplish this.

The new law contains standard store closing rules for all of Ontario. These standard rules will remain in place unless a municipality decides for

its own reasons to alter the law to reflect its own values or needs. It may do this by permitting stores to open or requiring them to close on Sundays and holidays. Municipalities are entitled to make this choice for themselves.

Under amendments to the Employment Standards Act, all retail workers will be able to refuse Sunday work which is, in their view, unreasonable, and the legislation will protect workers against reprisals. Employers and employees will be encouraged to work out co-operative arrangements for Sundays. If no settlement is reached through mediation, the matter will be referred to an independent referee.

The current law has been found to be unenforceable and has been abused by some retailers. The proposed amendments provide a workable, fair and flexible solution to the issue of Sunday and holiday shopping.

SCHOOL OPENING EXERCISES

Sessional paper P-26, re Lord's Prayer and Bible scripture.

**Hon. Mr. Ward:** Statutory and regulatory amendments are being drafted to permit opening or closing exercises to continue in Ontario public schools in a manner consistent with the spirit of the decision of the Ontario Court of Appeal that struck down regulation 262, section 28(1), concerning religious exercises in public schools.

The ministry has advised boards that under regulation 262, section 4, a board may exercise its discretion to offer opening or closing exercises, on the condition that such exercises respect the spirit of the Court of Appeal's decision. If a board chooses to continue with opening or



closing exercises, it may do so provided that any readings and prayers reflect the multicultural realities and traditions of Ontario society. Among such readings and prayers the Lord's Prayer may be included. However, in light of the court ruling, readings from one religion would not be permitted to be used exclusively or given a position of primacy.

### NATIONAL SPACE AGENCY

Sessional paper P-32, re federal space agency.

**Hon. Mr. Kwinter:** The Premier of Ontario recently stated in an open letter to the Prime Minister that:

The Canadian Space Agency is to be a national institution and therefore should be located in the national capital region.

The government of Ontario is prepared to participate financially towards the creation of the Canadian Space Agency if it is located in the national capital region.

The federal government has indicated that the new agency will be responsible for representing Canadian interests in the international space and aerospace communities. The government of Ontario's position is that the role can best be performed from the national capital region.

For the same reason, the US National Space and Aeronautics Administration has been headquartered in Washington, DC. Virtually all industrialized nations with space capacities have headquartered their space agencies in their capitals.

Historically, the national capital region has served as the centre for the administration of Canada's space program.

Major components of what would constitute the new agency are located in the national capital region. The federal departments of Communications; National Defence; Agriculture; Energy, Mines and Resources; External Affairs; Minister of State (Science and Technology); Department of Regional Industrial Expansion; and the National Research Council, all of which have been at the forefront of Canada's space programs, are headquartered there.

The national capital region plays an important role in Canada's aerospace industry.

Locating the new agency in the national capital

region would demonstrate the federal government's commitment to a truly national agency.

Ontario government efforts:

The government of Ontario has repeatedly urged the federal government to locate the Canadian Space Agency in the national capital region given that the agency is to have a national mandate.

The Premier sent an open letter to the Prime Minister on September 14, 1988. He indicated that the government of Ontario was willing to participate financially in an effort to pool the individual strengths and talents of all Canadians in an effort to create a unique, national and internationally reputable space agency in the national capital region.

The Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology addressed the Council of Science and Technology Ministers on March 24, 1988, and made the government of Ontario's position clear that the Canadian Space Agency should be located in the national capital region to represent the national interest.

The Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology wrote to his federal counterpart, Frank Oberle, Minister of State (Science and Technology), on February 6, 1987, strongly advising him to consider locating the new agency in the national capital region to represent the national interest.

The Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology addressed the Canadian Space Technology Business Conference on June 26, 1987. The minister emphasized the government of Ontario's position that the federal government strongly consider locating the Canadian Space Agency in the national capital region to represent the national interest.

The Premier and Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology have consulted broadly with Ontario's space and aerospace industries and representatives in the national capital region to assist in efforts to have the Canadian Space Agency located in the national capital region.

A resolution by the member for Ottawa-Rideau (Mrs. O'Neill), calling on the federal government to locate the new agency in the national capital region, was approved by the Ontario Legislative Assembly on November 3, 1988.

## ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS\*

(130 seats)

First Session, 34th Parliament

**Lieutenant Governor: Hon. Lincoln M. Alexander, PC, QC**

- 
- Adams, Peter (Peterborough L)  
 Allen, Richard (Hamilton West NDP)  
 Ballinger, William G. (Durham-York L)  
 Beer, Charles (York North L)  
 Black, Kenneth H. (Muskoka-Georgian Bay L)  
 Bossy, Maurice L. (Chatham-Kent L)  
**Bradley, Hon. James J.**, Minister of the Environment (St. Catharines L)  
 Brandt, Andrew S. (Sarnia PC)  
 Breagh, Michael J. (Oshawa NDP)  
 Brown, Michael A. (Algoma-Manitoulin L)  
 Bryden, Marion (Beaches-Woodbine NDP)  
 Callahan, Robert V. (Brampton South L)  
 Campbell, Sterling (Sudbury L)  
**Caplan, Hon. Elinor**, Minister of Health (Orisle L)  
 Carrothers, Douglas A. (Oakville South L)  
 Charlton, Brian A. (Hamilton Mountain NDP)  
 Chiarelli, Robert (Ottawa West L)  
 Cleary, John C. (Cornwall L)  
 Collins, Shirley (Wentworth East L)  
**Conway, Hon. Sean G.**, Minister of Mines (Renfrew North L)  
 Cooke, David R. (Kitchener L)  
 Cooke, David S. (Windsor-Riverside NDP)  
 Cordiano, Joseph (Lawrence L)  
 Cousens, W. Donald (Markham PC)  
 Cunningham, Dianne E. (London North PC)  
 Cureatz, Sam L. (Durham East PC)  
**Curling, Hon. Alvin**, Minister of Skills Development (Scarborough North L)  
 Daigeler, Hans (Nepean L)  
 Dietsch, Michael M. (St. Catharines-Brock L)  
**Eakins, Hon. John F.**, Minister of Municipal Affairs (Victoria-Haliburton L)  
**Edighoffer, Hon. Hugh A.**, Speaker (Perth L)  
 Elliot, R. Walter (Halton North L)  
**Elston, Hon. Murray J.**, Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet (Bruce L)  
 Epp, Herbert A. (Waterloo North L)  
 Eves, Ernie L. (Parry Sound PC)  
 Farnan, Michael (Cambridge NDP)  
 Faubert, Frank (Scarborough-Ellesmere L)  
 Fawcett, Joan M. (Northumberland L)  
 Ferraro, Rick E. (Guelph L)  
 Fleet, David (High Park-Swansea L)  
**Fontaine, Hon. René**, Minister of Northern Development (Cochrane North L)  
**Fulton, Hon. Ed**, Minister of Transportation (Scarborough East L)  
 Furlong, Allan W. (Durham Centre L)  
**Grandmaitre, Hon. Bernard C.**, Minister of Revenue (Ottawa East L)  
 Grier, Ruth A. (Etobicoke-Lakeshore NDP)  
 Haggerty, Ray (Niagara South L)  
 Hampton, Howard (Rainy River NDP)  
 Harris, Michael D. (Nipissing PC)  
 Hart, Christine E. (York East L)  
 Henderson, D. James (Etobicoke-Humber L)  
**Hošek, Hon. Chaviva**, Minister of Housing (Oakwood L)  
 Jackson, Cameron (Burlington South PC)  
 Johnson, Jack (Wellington PC)  
 Johnston, Richard F. (Scarborough West NDP)  
 Kanter, Ron (St. Andrew-St. Patrick L)  
**Kerrio, Hon. Vincent G.**, Minister of Natural Resources (Niagara Falls L)  
 Keyes, Kenneth A. (Kingston and The Islands L)  
 Kormos, Peter (Welland-Thorold NDP)  
 Kozyra, Taras B. (Port Arthur L)  
**Kwinter, Hon. Monte**, Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Wilson Heights L)  
 Laughren, Floyd (Nickel Belt NDP)  
 LeBourdais, Linda (Etobicoke West L)  
 Leone, Laureano (Downsview L)  
 Lipsett, Ron (Grey L)  
 Lupusella, Tony (Dovercourt L)  
 MacDonald, Keith (Prince Edward-Lennox L)  
 Mackenzie, Bob (Hamilton East NDP)  
 Mahoney, Steven W. (Mississauga West L)  
**Mancini, Hon. Remo**, Minister without Portfolio (Essex South L)  
 Marland, Margaret (Mississauga South PC)  
 Martel, Shelley (Sudbury East NDP)  
 Matrondola, Gino (Willowdale L)  
 McCague, George R. (Simcoe West PC)  
 McClelland, Carman (Brampton North L)  
 McGuigan, James F. (Essex-Kent L)  
 McGuinty, Dalton J. (Ottawa South L)  
 McLean, Allan K. (Simcoe East PC)  
**McLeod, Hon. Lyn**, Minister of Colleges and Universities (Fort William L)  
 Miclash, Frank (Kenora L)



Miller, Gordon I. (Norfolk L)  
 Morin, Gilles E. (Carleton East L)  
 Morin-Strom, Karl E. (Sault Ste. Marie NDP)  
 Neumann, David E. (Brantford L)  
 Nicholas, Cindy (Scarborough Centre L)  
 Nixon, J. Bradford (York Mills L)  
**Nixon, Hon. Robert F.**, Deputy Premier,  
 Treasurer of Ontario and Minister of Eco-  
 nomics and Minister of Financial Institutions  
 (Brant-Haldimand L)  
**Oddie Munro, Hon. Lily**, Minister of Culture  
 and Communications (Hamilton Centre L)  
 Offer, Steven (Mississauga North L)  
**O'Neil, Hon. Hugh P.**, Minister of Tourism and  
 Recreation (Quinte L)  
 O'Neill, Yvonne (Ottawa-Rideau L)  
 Owen, Bruce (Simcoe Centre L)  
**Patten, Hon. Richard**, Minister of Government  
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 Pelissero, Harry E. (Lincoln L)  
**Peterson, Hon. David R.**, Premier and Presi-  
 dent of the Council and Minister of Inter-  
 governmental Affairs (London Centre L)  
 Philip, Ed (Etobicoke-Rexdale NDP)  
**Phillips, Hon. Gerry**, Minister of Citizenship  
 (Scarborough-Agincourt L)  
 Poirier, Jean, Deputy Speaker and Chairman of  
 the Committees of the Whole House (Prescott  
 and Russell L)  
 Pollock, Jim (Hastings-Peterborough PC)  
 Polsinelli, Claudio (Yorkview L)  
 Poole, Dianne (Eglinton L)  
 Pope, Alan W. (Cochrane South PC)  
 Pouliot, Gilles (Lake Nipigon NDP)  
 Rae, Bob (York South NDP)  
**Ramsay, Hon. David**, Minister of Correctional  
 Services (Timiskaming L)  
 Ray, Michael C., Deputy Chairman of the  
 Committees of the Whole House (Windsor-  
 Walkerville L)  
 Reville, David (Riverdale NDP)  
 Reycraft, Douglas R. (Middlesex L)

**Riddell, Hon. Jack**, Minister of Agriculture and  
 Food (Huron L)  
 Roberts, Marietta L. D. (Elgin L)  
 Runciman, Robert W. (Leeds-Grenville PC)  
 Ruprecht, Tony (Parkdale L)  
**Scott, Hon. Ian G.**, Attorney General  
 (St. George-St. David L)  
 Smith, David W. (Lambton L)  
**Smith, Hon. E. Joan**, Solicitor General  
 (London South L)  
 Sola, John (Mississauga East L)  
**Sorbara, Hon. Gregory S.**, Minister of Labour  
 (York Centre L)  
 South, Larry (Frontenac-Addington L)  
 Sterling, Norman W. (Carleton PC)  
 Stoner, Norah (Durham West L)  
 Sullivan, Barbara (Halton Centre L)  
**Sweeney, Hon. John**, Minister of Community  
 and Social Services (Kitchener-Wilmot L)  
 Tatham, Charlie (Oxford L)  
 Velshi, Murad (Don Mills L)  
 Villeneuve, Noble (Stormont, Dundas and Glen-  
 garry PC)  
**Ward, Hon. Christopher C.**, Minister of  
 Education (Wentworth North L)  
 Wildman, Bud (Algoma NDP)  
**Wilson, Hon. Mavis**, Minister without Portfolio  
 (Dufferin-Peel L)  
 Wiseman, Douglas J. (Lanark-Renfrew PC)  
**Wong, Hon. Robert C.**, Minister of Energy  
 (Fort York L)  
**Wrye, Hon. William**, Minister of Consumer and  
 Commercial Relations (Windsor-Sandwich L)

\*The alphabetical list of members appears in each issue. Lists of the members of the executive council, parliamentary assistants and members of committees, brought up to date as necessary, are published in Hansard in the first and last issues of each session and on the first sitting day of each month.

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# Hansard

## Official Report of Debates

### Legislative Assembly of Ontario

**First Session, 34th Parliament**  
Tuesday, November 29, 1988



Speaker: Honourable Hugh A. Edighoffer  
Clerk of the House: Claude L. DesRosiers

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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday, November 29, 1988

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayers.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### ONTARIO LEGAL AID PLAN

**Miss Martel:** Recently I met with the director and a board member of the Sudbury Community Legal Clinic regarding funding of clinics in Ontario. As a consequence of this discussion, I would like to raise two concerns.

The amount of funding provided to the clinic funding committee in October 1988 was almost \$3 million short of the amount requested. While the approved budget did incorporate a five per cent increase over 1987 expenditures, it did not include some \$583,000 needed to operate the six new clinics for a full 12 months. Funds to cover the shortfall will come from two sources, cash savings and surplus funds already held by the clinics. Thus, an already difficult situation will be exacerbated, and this can only be to the detriment of the entire clinic system.

The greater concern is that after this initial hurdle, the clinic funding committee will still be faced with the need to obtain additional funding by April 1989 in order to avoid further cost-saving measures. The measures can only result in a loss of clinic staff positions or legal clinics themselves, as the funding committee struggles to make ends meet. This cannot be allowed to happen in view of the important work being carried on by clinics in Ontario on behalf of those least able to help themselves.

Second, the government must commit itself to completing the legal clinic system in Ontario. Clinics already established have demonstrated the need for poverty law services for low-income individuals. There remain significant gaps in the services provided, and more resources are needed to ensure that comprehensive services are available to the most needy in our society. Some 20 regions in the province still lack a community legal clinic. The government must commit itself to funding new centres in these areas over the next five years.

### HOME CARE

**Mr. Villeneuve:** Members here will be aware that I have raised several issues concerning the

wellbeing of senior citizens in eastern Ontario and particularly those in the riding I represent.

Today I want to mention not the Liberal government's neglect of seniors' housing but the integrated homemaker program. The Liberal government refers to programs which enable people to stay out of institutions, and I quote its statement, as "the cornerstone of social programs." Indeed, this government has referred to the integrated homemaker program itself as the cornerstone of community support programs for seniors in rural and small-town Ontario. Knowing how this government operates, what comes next is inevitable. The cornerstone is being weakened.

The Eastern Ontario Health Unit has been told to cut back on costs and the number of people served under its integrated homemaker service. Some 727 people are currently being helped under the program in eastern Ontario and in the riding I represent. The health unit knows it cannot justify cutting back on the number of people served. However, if it challenges the funding restrictions, the government may react as it did against one well-known person, John Sewell.

I and my colleagues hope, therefore, that this government will actually try to live up to the lipservice it has paid to this most important cornerstone program and provide needed support to those people in rural Ontario.

### AIR QUALITY

**Mr. Laughren:** On June 7, 1988, I wrote a letter to the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley) concerning the fact that in the Sudbury area, when the weather is cold and windy, the tailings from Inco's smelter operations blow over the surrounding area and into the lakes, the streams and the vegetation and into people's homes.

Every time I write to the minister about it I get nothing but clichés of concern back from him, so in June I wrote him another letter and asked at the end of that letter if I could have a decent response, not simply an apology for Inco. The minister did not respond at that time, but his office indicated to me that they would try to

respond to me. That was two weeks ago, and it is going back to a letter from June 7.

Now, it seems to me that when the regional municipality of Sudbury spends a lot of money trying to dispel the myths about the environment in Sudbury, the Minister of the Environment has an obligation to help it dispel some of the reality of Sudbury, namely, the blowing tailings.

When tourists driving through the Sudbury area have to turn on their headlights to drive along the Trans-Canada Highway because of the blowing tailings, you can imagine what kind of message that gives to tourists from other parts of Ontario and, indeed, Canada. So it is time that the minister responded with a decent response as to what kind of action he intends to take.

#### SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

**Mrs. Cunningham:** On September 6, 1988, the Social Assistance Review Committee released its report, *Transitions*. It has been three months and we have not heard an overall response to the report, nor have we seen the implementation of any of the urgent recommendations.

It was the intent of George Thomson to have the government respond to the overall report within six months of its release. We all know that it was not his intent to have no action on the report for a six-month period. In fact, he recommended that the government implement a number of urgent changes, including immediate increases in benefit levels and more adequate shelter subsidies within one year of the report's release. The committee felt that movement on these issues within one year would not create any unintended problems as long as the overall first stage of reforms is completed within the one-year period.

Yesterday the minister stated that his announcement of increased welfare rates would probably just match inflation and that the large amounts of money would not be available until the spring budget. This government knew a year ago that the Thomson report was scheduled to be released this fall. Money should have been set aside from last year's budget for the sole purpose of implementing those urgent recommendations, recommendations that the government must have realized would emerge from such a complicated report. He could be cutting back within his own bureaucracy to ensure that these recommendations are implemented.

#### ELECTION FINANCES

**Mr. Tatham:** Last week, during a tepid question period, I asked the Attorney General

(Mr. Scott) a question. Now I have a statement. Damon Runyon said, "The race is not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong—but that's the way to bet."

Legislation imposes strict accounting for party and members' election expenses. Is there not a fine line between freedom of expression and third-party spending at election time?

Might and Right were always fighting,  
In our youth, it seems exciting.  
Right is always nearly winning,  
Might can hardly keep from grinning.

#### TRANSIT SERVICES

**Mr. Breaugh:** I want to announce today the coming of the GO train to Whitby. I know the minister will probably make more of an announcement a little later on, but it actually has arrived. It has been there on at least two occasions so far this week. Next week it begins its regular runs, and when the politicians are through cutting the ribbons and sweeping off the sidewalks, then the people will actually get a chance, finally, to use the GO train from Whitby into Toronto. Once the minister gets that simple job done, there is just one more thing that has to be done. He has to bring it a little further east, right out into Oshawa.

1340

#### PALLIATIVE CARE

**Mr. Faubert:** Residents from my riding and throughout the city of Scarborough have expressed to me the need to increase services to those in need of palliative care. The prospect of a community-based palliative care program in the city of Scarborough is an issue that is appealing to both the mind and the heart.

It is estimated that 70 per cent of palliative care patients would prefer to remain with their families in the familiar surroundings of their own home as long as possible. However, due to the difficulties of obtaining professional, effective and timely assistance in the home, 90 per cent of patients are admitted to hospital earlier than necessary. This is a burden on both the patients themselves and on the taxpayers.

The establishment of a community-based palliative care program would extend specialized palliative care skills and expertise into the community, enabling more patients to stay at home for a longer period of time. This would be more cost-efficient in financial terms and more spiritually effective in human terms, as the patients would spend more of their precious last days in familiar and comfortable surroundings.



I am pleased that this government is moving towards a more community-based health care system.

I would also like to acknowledge the efforts of the North Scarborough Rotary Club and Scarborough television which are holding an auction on the Scarborough cable station this Friday and Saturday, December 2 and 3, to assist Scarborough General Hospital in its efforts to establish a palliative care outreach team in Scarborough.

## STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY

### SCHOOL DRINKING WATER

**Hon. Mr. Ward:** I am today releasing the results of the first 10 tests conducted by the Ministry of the Environment on samples of drinking water taken from water fountains at elementary schools in the greater Toronto region.

The results indicate that the practice of flushing the water system for a period of five minutes reduces the level of soluble lead in the sample to below the allowable limit of 50 parts per billion.

Yesterday, my ministry recommended to school boards that drinking water sources in all Ontario schools be flushed for at least five minutes each morning before students and staff arrive. This practice will continue.

Samples taken from a further 10 schools are being analysed now by the Ministry of the Environment, and I expect to be able to release the results of those tests later today.

### TEMAGAMI DISTRICT RESOURCES

#### RESSOURCES NATURELLES DE LA RÉGION DE TEMAGAMI

**Hon. Mr. Fontaine:** Members will be aware of the ongoing efforts of the government to resolve a number of issues in the Temagami area. These include the construction of certain logging roads; the land claim of the Teme-Augama Anishnabai, known as TAA; concerns about forest management practices, and the ongoing viability of the Milne lumber company.

We have already taken a number of significant initiatives in order to pursue the following objectives. First, we want to ensure long-term economic viability for the community of Temagami. Second, we wish to see a fair and practical resolution of the land claim. Third, we recognize the environmental significance of the Temagami area.

We believe these matters have to be resolved through a spirit of co-operation and compromise among the various individuals and groups who

have a stake in how this land will be used, for living, working and recreation.

For more than a century, native and non-native residents and visitors have coexisted in the Temagami region. The mainstay of the economy is the logging industry, which has been in active operation for more than 80 years. In the town of Temagami itself, the major employer is William Milne and Sons Ltd. Other forest products companies harvest in the area as well. The region has also traditionally provided outstanding outdoor recreational opportunities.

In 1973, the TAA asserted a land claim to some 10,000 square kilometres in the Temagami area. In 1984, this matter reached the Supreme Court of Ontario, which ruled that there was in fact no valid land claim. An appeal of this ruling by the TAA is due to be heard by the Ontario Court of Appeal in January.

In 1986, this government attempted to settle this claim. We offered the TAA a settlement totalling \$30 million in land, money and other considerations, including self-government arrangements. The band rejected this offer and decided instead to proceed with its appeal.

While my colleague the Attorney General (Mr. Scott) will shortly speak to the native land claim issue, I would like to focus for a moment on the concerns about recreational and wilderness values of the area.

The Ministry of Natural Resources has been involved for more than a decade in working with area residents, tourist operators, environmental and other groups to manage and to protect the area through the Lake Temagami plan for land use and recreational development. This was accomplished with the help of a citizens' advisory committee.

In 1983, the ministry created Lake Evelyn-Smoothwater Park as a 72,000-hectare wilderness area. Last May, this government took additional initiatives to preserve wilderness and recreational values with the creation of two new waterway parks in the area and placed additional restrictions on the uses permitted in provincial parks.

The Ministry of Natural Resources maintained a process of open planning and public consultation with respect to the use of the area outside the park. In 1983, it produced a timber management and operating plan for the Temagami unit which included proposals for access roads. These roads were necessary to provide access to alternative areas because the creation of the park had removed timber areas available to local forest companies.

In order to ensure that logging and other land use activities would be undertaken in an environmentally sensitive way, the government established the Temagami Area Working Group with representation from a broad range of those interested in the area. The TAA was asked to participate but declined to do so. The government accepted the working group's recommendations, including the creation of a council to oversee logging and other resource-related activities in the region. This body, the Temagami Advisory Council, has been created and has already had several meetings. It is playing an important role in advising the government on ways in which to manage area resources on a sustainable basis.

Let me now turn to the Milne lumber company. This company, which has been in operation for more than 60 years, employs about 150 people at its mill in Temagami. For some years, Milne has been experiencing financial difficulties. At no time, however, has the company been without a wood supply.

This government has assisted the company by taking the following steps. In March 1988, the Northern Ontario Development Corp. approved a loan guarantee of \$750,000. In September, the industrial restructuring commissioner was asked to determine under what circumstances a viable sawmill could be maintained. A preliminary report from the Centre de recherche industrielle du Québec will be ready soon.

The commissioner has also had extensive meetings with the mill management, the mill workers' committee and others in the community. Despite these efforts, the Bank of Nova Scotia has indicated that it intends to demand repayment of its loan this Thursday. It is not known at this stage whether the bank's action will result in a shutdown of the mill. The industrial restructuring commissioner and the company are meeting with the bank today in an effort to get it to delay this action and to co-operate in evaluating the longer-run potential of the mill.

I would now like to turn to the Red Squirrel Road and the issue of other logging roads in the area. The Red Squirrel Road was begun 30 years ago and is now 55 kilometres long. The proposed 15-kilometre extension of this road is necessary to allow Milne access to wood supplies in the next decade. The road will also provide access to timber for Liskeard Lumber Ltd., Grant Forest Products and Rexwood Products Ltd. to support their operations later in the 1990s.

This road was the subject of an environmental assessment which included public consultation.

The assessment was accepted in the spring of this year by the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley), with road construction subject to a series of conditions. Before work could begin on the extension of the road, the TAA announced that it had blockaded the right of way. Meanwhile, the Temagami Wilderness Society filed for judicial review of the decision not to hold a hearing.

Given these events, and in close consultation with the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Kerrio) and the minister responsible for native affairs (Mr. Scott), I instructed the native affairs co-ordinator of my ministry to work with Chief Gary Potts and the TAA band executive on a forest management and access road policy in the area that would be acceptable to the native people.

This led to a proposal for a new body to be called the Wakimika Stewardship Council. The council will be empowered to make decisions regarding timber management in the area of approximately 500 square kilometres in and around the lands to be accessed by the Red Squirrel, Goulard and Liskeard road extensions. The council will have an independent chairman acceptable to the band and four members representing the natives, the local community, the forest products industry and the tourist industry.

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During these discussions it was made clear that the council proposal was being advanced independently of any land claim considerations and consistent with the government's multiple-use policy. The council will have to develop and approve an interim management plan pertaining to road access.

Earlier this month, Chief Potts advised us that the band had rejected the proposal in favour of a body where decisions were made on the basis of equal representation between the band and the province, excluding participation by other parties. In addition, the land area under its jurisdiction should be related to the full land claim area.

With respect to the interim plan and the construction of another access road, the Goulard Road, Chief Potts indicated that the band would block construction of the road if talks failed. Any threat to block another road cannot be tolerated, and we are therefore compelled to take action in this regard.

On behalf of the government, I am today indicating that this counterproposal is unsatisfactory because, in essence, it reasserts their land



claim to over 10,000 square kilometres. Our discussions over the summer and fall were intended to find an interim solution for the Wakimika area, as it was considered to be the heartland of the band's concerns. The discussions were not seen by either side as an attempt to settle the land claim.

I believe that the proposal put forward by the province for the Wakimika Stewardship Council represents a co-operative approach to meeting the legitimate interests of all groups in this area. It is our intention to continue discussing options with the band to see if we cannot find a resolution. Chief Potts has been advised of our position in a letter that is appended to this statement.

As we have said before, we are prepared to resume negotiations on the land claim when the blockade ends.

The uncertainty of this situation has caused a difficult period for the Temagami community.

There has already been a significant delay in the beginning of construction of the Red Squirrel Road. To compensate for this, the Ministry of Natural Resources had made other short-term supplies available to the mill and intends to do so until the road is ready for use. This will require some extraordinary measures, including the amendment of certain timber management plans.

With respect to the Red Squirrel Road extension itself, I am reaffirming on behalf of the government the decision to proceed with construction. I am also reaffirming our policies with respect to other access roads.

To be more specific, I want to reaffirm our intention to allow the Goulard Road to proceed on schedule. The wood supply accessed by this road is vital to the future of the Goulard Lumber Ltd., which makes an important contribution to the economy of the region. The need for the road and its location have been reviewed by the Temagami Advisory Council, and that group has confirmed its importance; the suggestions they made to mitigate the impact of the road have been accepted. In addition, every attempt will be made to accommodate the concerns about the river crossings expressed by TAA members. We cannot, however, accept the right of the TAA to blockade the road.

We believe that the forest industry continues to be the cornerstone to the economic future of the Temagami area. A number of legal steps, to be outlined shortly by the Attorney General, may be necessary to give effect to our policies.

Other initiatives related to diversification are also necessary to help ensure long-term economic stability in the Temagami area.

My own ministry is actively working with residents of the community to establish a municipal economic development agency, and we have committed \$1 million over five years to fund it.

The Ministry of Tourism and Recreation has established a task force to identify public and private sector tourism initiatives that could be undertaken.

Also, as chairman of the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Board, I intend to recommend to the other board members that a special development fund be set aside to finance long-term job creation initiatives in Temagami.

We have also asked the Ontario Northland Transportation Commission, a major land owner in the town of Temagami, to identify economic development opportunities which it could support.

It is our policy to manage the province's resources in a spirit of consultation and constructive compromise. I hope that we will be able to work with all of those with interests in the Temagami area in that spirit.

Nous tâcherons de poursuivre notre travail dans un esprit de collaboration. C'est un principe sur lequel nous avons fondé les politiques que nous énonçons aujourd'hui. Nous nous engageons à maintenir des pourparlers ouverts, honnêtes et justes pour toutes les parties intéressées.

**Hon. Mr. Scott:** The Minister of Northern Development (Mr. Fontaine) has announced a series of initiatives for the Lake Temagami area. The government believes that those initiatives are in the interests of all Canadians who live in the province. However, let me spend just a moment reviewing the history of the land claim and outlining what will next transpire.

The Robinson-Huron Treaty was negotiated and signed at Sault Ste. Marie in 1850. Well after the signing, some Temagami Indians began to advance the claim, first to the government of the province of Canada and then, after Confederation, to the federal and provincial governments, that they had not received their entitlements either as to land or to the annual payments provided for in the treaty itself.

In the 1880s, Canada agreed to provide a reserve. By that time, however, Canada could no longer meet its obligation, for the British North America Act had allocated the lands to the stewardship of the government of Ontario. For its part, Ontario did not make any land available to the Teme-Augama Anishnabai until 1941.

The present reserve at Bear Island, which is less than 2.5 square kilometres, is far smaller

than the 125 square kilometres contemplated by the federal government. Trying to settle the claim by negotiation was at the root of our offer, the first in Ontario history, made in 1986.

Our offer was not just one of cash. It was more than that. It provided the TAA with the capacity to choose a combination of a larger land base, approximately 250 square kilometres; the financing of new programs; the establishing of new methods for land management on a co-operative basis; and the provision of additional financial resources. It also, and most important to me, contained the elements for a self-government agreement.

We believed then and we believe now that our offer, on behalf of all the people of Ontario, was fair and practical. It would have gone a substantial way in addressing the historic grievances of the past.

The TAA land claim covers an area of 10,000 square kilometres. The TAA believed the appeal of the land claim had to proceed in the courts and rejected our offer. Consequently, negotiations ceased. We respect but very much regret their decision.

We also regret that after protracted discussions, our offer regarding the Wakimika Stewardship Council to the TAA was not acceptable as a basis for discussion and was also rejected. Nevertheless, we remain prepared to continue to discuss different proposals for that area.

But now, for all the people of the region, the future is marked by an unacceptable degree of uncertainty, causing hardship to many, white and native alike.

The Minister of Northern Development has described the importance of the Goulard Road to the economic wellbeing of the Lake Temagami region. Therefore, we have notified the counsel for the TAA that, as part of the Bear Island land claims appeal, which begins within a month, we will be applying for an injunction preventing the TAA from blockading the Goulard Road, as they have now threatened to do. Further, we will be asking the court to order the end of the blockade by the TAA of the Red Squirrel Road extension. We have requested that the motion be heard as quickly as possible.

The government of Ontario, I believe in good faith, has endeavoured to bring about a resolution of these difficult, protracted and complex matters in a way that would best meet the needs of all Ontarians. We remain prepared to continue meeting at any time and at any place to talk with all interested parties, in the hope and with the prayer that a fair and lasting resolution will

finally emerge for all the people who live in the Temagami region.

1400

## RESPONSES

### SCHOOL DRINKING WATER

**Mrs. Grier:** The announcement today by the Minister of Education (Mr. Ward) has two major problems. The first one is that this government is still dealing only with schools when it comes to lead in drinking water. It is obvious from the nature of the problem that this exists wherever there are lead-soldered pipes. The recommendation that pipes be flushed out for five minutes ought to be widely issued and used by everyone, especially everyone living in a building less than five years old.

The second major problem is the allowable limit of 50 parts per billion that is being quoted. This standard is grossly out of date. We do not have standards in this province. We have a guideline and this is a federal guideline.

It was in 1986 that the United States Environmental Protection Agency recommended dropping the standard there to 20 parts per billion. Now new health evidence has the Environmental Protection Agency recommending five parts per billion.

Fifty parts per billion is far too high a guideline. The ministry and the government as a whole ought to be looking at reducing that significantly and implementing standards.

### TEMAGAMI DISTRICT RESOURCES

**Mr. Wildman:** I must express our disappointment at the announcements today by the Minister of Northern Development (Mr. Fontaine) and the Attorney General (Mr. Scott). It is obvious that the government has taken this out of the hands of the Ministry of Natural Resources completely, particularly since yesterday the minister himself indicated that there probably would not be any statements in the near future on this issue and that the matter was out of his hands.

In his statement, the Minister of Northern Development indicated that the government was attempting to meet three objectives: (1) the long-term economic viability of the community of Temagami, which the industrial restructuring commissioner is looking into; (2) the settlement of the land claim; and (3) the environmental protection in the area.

In these statements there is nothing about protection of the environment, except a reference to the completely discredited, limited environmental assessment, so-called, on the Red



Squirrel Road. There is no attempt here, in terms of the economic viability of the area, to look at a reallocation of timber in the short term so as to preserve the jobs for William Milne and Sons. There is no attempt at all to deal with the economic issues except to say that the roads will be completed despite the concerns of the Teme-Augama Anishnabai.

In regard to the land claim, we have unfortunately a move towards an approach similar to what we have seen in the Alberta situation with the Lubicon band. We have a government that is prepared, while saying it wants to negotiate, to go to court for an injunction to force roads into an area that is disputed and, I suppose in the short term, even to use force to remove the blockade, and yet it says that the government is prepared to negotiate in good faith. I doubt very much if the chief and band can see that in any way to be good faith.

The government says the stewardship council it proposed was a good proposal which was equitable. In fact, if the band had accepted it, it would have been as much as saying that it was giving up part of its claim.

This is a sad day for Indian rights in this province and for the economic development of Temagami.

**Mr. B. Rae:** I simply want to say that I think the announcements today will leave a legacy of bitterness for a long time in this province. I think it is a significant defeat for the cause of native rights. What the native people are doing in this instance is blockading the extension of roads into a part of this province that they believe historically is theirs.

When the government says, "You cannot do that; you are not allowed to block that extension, and that extension will take place," what in fact the government of Ontario is doing, by a unilateral action, is asserting its right as opposed to the right of the native people. That is not acceptable to us. It is a profound affront to the notion that we have to come to a historic accommodation with our first citizens in this province. It is a unilateral act by the government of Ontario that I think will, as I say, leave a legacy of real bitterness and difficulty in this province for a very long time to come.

I might also add that this is a terrible defeat for the environment. This is a situation where the government has rejected proposals from a number of groups for a buffer zone and for the creation of a broader and bigger wilderness zone than currently exists. It is a situation where roads are being built without a complete environmental

assessment and without public hearings. It is a significant defeat for our native people. It is a significant defeat for those of us who care about the future of this province.

**Mr. Harris:** I guess what we have today is really a statement pointing out the total incompetence on the part of this government in the whole affair.

In the 1987 election campaign, this government and this Premier (Mr. Peterson) played fast and loose with jobs in northern Ontario to win votes in the south. He has played games now for over a year and a half as a sop to that election stand. Now not only is he no further ahead but he is much further behind on all fronts: on behalf of native peoples, on behalf of the environment, on behalf of northern Ontario and on behalf of the forest industry. In fact, he is much further behind than he was when he started.

I really believe and the people of northern Ontario believe that he has played fast and loose with Milne lumber, he has played fast and loose with those families that depended on those jobs, he has played fast and loose with those families in the other lumber companies in the area and he has played fast and loose, obviously, with the native people as well.

One of the sad things today is, where are the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Kerrio) and his ministry? The Ministry of Natural Resources owns that land. It has a responsibility for stewardship for that land. Well, I am sorry; he shakes his head, but the court ruling that was read out by the two ministers says he does. He is responsible as the minister.

The people give the Ministry of Natural Resources and the minister a responsibility for managing those lands, for the stewardship of those lands. Now the Premier has destroyed the Ministry of Natural Resources. When you talk to people who work in the Ministry of Natural Resources who are involved in forest management, they do not know whether their boss is the Premier, Shelley Peterson, the Attorney General or the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley), but they know it is not their minister.

I tell members, I cannot believe that the Minister of Natural Resources, the man I knew for eight years, is sitting in this House today as a pretender, being the Minister of Natural Resources, in the most important job that ministry has. I really am surprised.

The Premier has destroyed the minister; he has destroyed the ministry. He has done nothing to advance the cause of forestry practices; he has done nothing to advance the interest of economic

issues of those of us who depend on resources in the north; he has done nothing for the natives; he has done nothing for the environment, and it really is a sad day in this Legislature as we listen to these announcements today.

**Mr. Eves:** I think it would be kind to say that the government is back where it started. It certainly has wrestled this problem to the ceiling over the last year and a half.

A spokesman for the special cabinet committee appointed by the Premier was quoted last week as saying, "We'll have to wait to see what cabinet wants to do." Well, now we all know what cabinet wants to do.

We have seen this government in other aspects and other ministries—namely, the Ministry of Health—supposedly negotiate by confrontation. Now we are seeing negotiation by court injunction. As Chief Potts said, "It is going to be a tremendous hollow victory for the crown as the years go by."

#### SCHOOL DRINKING WATER

**Mr. Jackson:** Although we appreciate the news that the Minister of Education (Mr. Ward) has brought into the House today, it is indicative of just how poorly this issue has been handled by his ministry, since matters of environmental safety and risk in our schools have been laid at the feet of his government for the last two and a half years and we have not had a comment from this ministry, except in the last two days, about the unacceptable lead levels in our schools.

These are serious matters. If the minister put these into perspective, he would be aware that all of our new schools have day care spaces, that we have before- and after-school programs in these schools, that there are increased levels of risk for children three or four years of age. We have pregnant women either teaching or volunteering in our schools. I understand that the Ministry of Community and Social Services today announced to the families of the children that they should not be drinking the water in our schools.

This announcement simply has the effect of spreading oil on lead-contaminated water. When will the ministry undertake a serious public review of the environmental hazards which are facing children in our schools and their ability to learn, and facing teachers and their ability to teach in our schools? It is the minister's responsibility.

1410

#### ORAL QUESTIONS

##### TEMAGAMI DISTRICT RESOURCES

**Mr. B. Rae:** I have a question to the Premier concerning the announcement which was made today. I am sure the Premier would agree with me that the extension of two of the roads in question, the Goulard Road and the Red Squirrel Road, directly involves the extension of the roads into lands which are historically claimed by the Temagami band.

If that is true—and I do not want to interrupt the Attorney General (Mr. Scott)—when the Premier and his minister say, "We cannot, however, accept the right of the Teme-Augama Anishnabai to blockade the road," they are unilaterally, on their own, ruling on the legitimacy of the land claim which is now in dispute.

Why would the Premier not accept that while there are discussions and negotiations on the land claim, there should be no unilateral action taken by the government of Ontario with respect to the extension of existing roads and the construction of new roads? Both of those things are unilateral actions by this government—

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you. The question has been asked.

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** I say respectfully to my honourable friend opposite that he is wrong. We are asking for a ruling of the court on these matters. There is no unilateral imposition in this particular matter. The courts will decide.

**Mr. B. Rae:** Unless I misunderstood the statement which was made by the Minister of Northern Development (Mr. Fontaine), what the Premier has just said is completely incorrect.

The minister said, "With respect to the Red Squirrel Road extension itself, I am reaffirming on behalf of the government the decision to proceed with construction.... To be more specific, I want to reaffirm our intention to allow the Goulard Road to proceed on schedule."

The Premier is clearly stating unilaterally and quite categorically on behalf of his government, and he was one of the negotiating parties to this discussion with the band, that it is his intention to proceed with those roads and take away the status quo, take away the right of the band itself to assert its historic right. The Premier has broken faith with the native people, with our first citizens, and he has taken unilateral action which will leave a legacy of bitterness for a long time to come in this province.

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** My honourable friend recognizes the complexity of this matter, and he would not want to misrepresent the facts in this



situation. The trial judge has ruled in favour of the people of Ontario, as the member knows. It is now going to the Court of Appeal. There is no unilateral imposition of anything. We respect the right of the court to rule in this matter, and that is why the Attorney General has laid out the procedure he has. It is going before the court on the matter of injunctions and the court will pass judgement on it; not us, not me, not the member or anyone in this Legislature, but the court.

**Mr. B. Rae:** Who is applying for the injunction? The man in the moon?

**Mr. Speaker:** Is that your supplementary?

**Mr. B. Rae:** You are applying for the injunction. The Attorney General is applying for the injunction. Don't pretend you are not involved directly. Don't pretend you are not responsible when you are responsible.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. B. Rae:** The Attorney General is shaking his head.

**Hon. Mr. Scott:** The court is going to decide.

**Mr. B. Rae:** On the basis of the application that you made. You know that full well.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. B. Rae:** In his announcement today, the Minister of Northern Development said he wanted to reach an agreement that would be acceptable to the native people. That has been blown out of the water. To quote his own words, it would be an agreement "that would recognize the environmental significance of the Temagami area."

I wonder why the Minister of Northern Development in his statement did not have at least the straightforwardness to admit that the government of Ontario has determined that there will be no full environmental hearing. In fact, the wilderness group has had to apply to the court on its own in order to force the government to have such a hearing.

Why will the Premier not admit that he has denied the environmental claims of the wilderness groups and he is denying the native land claim of the band in question? That is the kind of solution that he has provided, one that is not acceptable to two of the partners to whom he has said an agreement has to be acceptable.

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** I will tell my honourable friend that there have been very long discussions on this matter. It goes back a long way. We brought John Daniel—

**Mr. B. Rae:** And came up with nothing.

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** The member is right. Unfortunately, it was one of those situations. Mr. Daniel came in with a bipartisan group and tried to forge a consensus in this particular area. We have had ongoing discussions with the band where we tried to develop new and creative ways to manage the resource. It went on for a very long period of time.

I stand and say in full confidence that I think we exhausted every reasonable alternative in the circumstances. We stand here in front of you, still prepared to discuss these matters and look for new and creative solutions to these problems.

At the same time, we think that the position put forward is a reasonable one. We are prepared to discuss these matters in the future and sit down with the band or anyone else on future occasions. But after those alternatives were exhausted, we are now in the position that we are asking the court for its judgement on this matter.

I think my honourable friend would not want to mischaracterize this situation. He and I may have a disagreement on a particular matter and it goes to the highest jury in the land or goes to the court. We respect the rule of law in this province and we are proceeding and showing deference to that respect.

#### CORONER'S INQUEST

**Mr. B. Rae:** I would like to ask a question of the Solicitor General, speaking of respect for the rule of law. She will know that Bernard Bastien was killed on August 14 by the tactical rescue unit of the Ontario Provincial Police.

She will also know that recently the counsel for the family involved asked for a judicial review of the inquest because of apparent bias on the part of the coroner. The lawyer for the coroner has now requested an adjournment of that Divisional Court hearing which will mean a total halt to the inquest proceedings until some time in the spring.

I am sure the minister would agree that the handling of this tragic event has been a disaster from the very beginning. I wonder why the Solicitor General does not today admit that fact and stand up and say that the only way to resolve this is to have full public inquiry with full subpoena powers to get to the bottom of how this tragedy could possibly have occurred.

**Hon. Mrs. Smith:** The inquest is presently adjourned while these matters are looked into. In the meantime, I, like others, await the decision and continue to discuss the matter with those involved and will continue to do so. Until this is

resolved, I have nothing to announce on the subject.

**Mr. B. Rae:** This is a tragedy for the Bastien family, a tragedy which is being compounded by the complete incompetence of this government with respect to this inquiry.

In 1976 the annual report of the then Solicitor General, in noting the establishment of these units, said, "Their purpose is to deal effectively with barricaded gunmen or individuals or groups bent on sniping, hijacking, kidnapping, terrorism or hostage-taking."

It did not say anything about dealing with kids who are trying or threatening to take their own lives. That was not part of the intention of the group when it was established in 1976. Does the minister not think we need a public inquiry to find out how these tactical units could have gone so far wrong, how their use could have been so wrong in this situation and precisely who was responsible for this misuse of the tactical force?

**Hon. Mrs. Smith:** As we know, some steps have already been taken to make sure that only proper use is made of the tactical squads, in so far as only the top officer in the force can now call them forth into duty. This is one of the steps that has already been taken. We will examine with great care and great concern any recommendations from the inquest and, at that time, will decide whether a public inquiry is necessary.

**Mr. B. Rae:** I cannot believe what I have just heard. The minister is saying that she will consider a public inquiry for this family. After the tragedy that they have been through, she is making them go through a coroner's inquest. We already know that what the tactical unit was doing in Windsor in this situation was completely out of character with its original conception and its original design. The hearing is now adjourned. It will be adjourned until well into the spring.

1420

Is the minister seriously telling us that she will only consider a public inquiry after the family has been through the ordeal of the delay and then the further completion, or not, of the coroner's inquest? Is that what she is seriously arguing is the most humane and effective way to answer the questions which cry out to be answered for this family some four months after the death of Bernard Bastien?

**Hon. Mrs. Smith:** We all feel for the family. Unfortunately, nothing that can be done either by virtue of an inquest or a public inquiry, if one is held, will much relieve their personal suffering,

for which I feel strongly. They have our sympathy.

On the other hand, we must look at the recommendations that come out of this with the common good of the province in mind, and this will be done. We cannot prejudge, as has the member, that the tactics used were completely out of hand until a fair hearing is given. At that time, we will both hear the results of the inquest and examine the details.

**Mr. B. Rae:** All right, justifiably it makes sense? Using a SWAT team to deal with a kid who is trying to take his own life makes a lot of sense?

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**Hon. Mrs. Smith:** The terms of reference read by the member included the word "barricaded." I believe there was some question raised as to whether indeed this gentleman had barricaded himself in and threatened to kill a police officer, but these are the subjects of the inquest.

#### FUND-RAISING DINNER

**Mr. Brandt:** My question is to the Premier. The question I have for the Premier is with respect to a fund-raising dinner which is scheduled for January 11. That particular dinner is being sponsored by George Mann, who is chairman of Unicorp Canada Corp., a company with substantial interests in the natural gas industry. The purpose behind the fund-raiser is to raise money for the Minister of Energy (Mr. Wong), as I understand it according to the invitation.

The questions I have for the Premier are, first, is he aware of the date and the nature of the dinner; and second, does he consider it appropriate that the chairman of a company which is in the natural gas industry would hold a fund-raising dinner for the Minister of Energy?

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** Frankly, I have no idea of the matter that the honourable member is talking about. I was not aware of the dates or any dinner. I do not know any details about it.

**Mr. Brandt:** By way of further information to the Premier, I would like to bring to his attention that in the invitation that was sent out, it was indicated by the individual sponsoring this dinner that the money for the dinner is to be sent to St. Mary Street. Upon review of that particular address, we found out that is the address of the Ontario Liberal Party headquarters and that is where the money is to be sent.

It is a fund-raising dinner, and I say to the Treasurer (Mr. R. F. Nixon) I have no objection



to fund-raising dinners, but the point with respect to this fund-raising dinner is that the Minister of Energy has regulatory powers over a corporation and, in this particular instance, the chairman of that corporation is in fact soliciting assistance by way of requesting funds for the Minister of Energy. I find that kind of lack of objectivity, if you will, that lack of an arm's-length relationship causes me great concern.

**Mr. Speaker:** Do you have a question?

**Mr. Brandt:** Is the first minister of this province concerned about that?

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** I would be concerned if there was any suggestion of anything untoward. I am not aware of the details of this, but as my honourable friend knows, fund-raising is a highly regulated activity for all parties, for his party and for all three parties in this particular province. He has a number of fund-raisers for his party. We have a number for ours. Everything that is done is public and there for everyone to see.

I know my honourable friend may have taken a different view since he has been in opposition, but I am not aware of anything untoward in these circumstances.

**Mr. Brandt:** Let me read to the Premier from an article that appeared in today's *Globe and Mail*. The article states that Union Enterprises Ltd., a subsidiary of Unicorp, received approval over another company, TransCanada PipeLines Ltd., to build a natural gas line from the United States.

The article states: "Union Enterprises's proposed pipeline from Michigan, which could import into Ontario as much as 200 million cubic feet a year of US gas...has had vigorous public backing from Ontario Energy Minister Robert Wong." The chairman of the same company that will benefit from the construction of that gas line is now holding a partisan Liberal fund-raising event for the minister.

Again I want to state without any equivocation that I have no problem with fund-raising dinners. I do have a problem with this dinner, recognizing that the chairman of a corporation that could benefit very directly from the decisions of the Minister of Energy is in fact soliciting funds for the support of the Ontario Liberal Party. Does the Premier consider that to be appropriate, and what actions does he intend to take on it?

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** As I understand it, it is the National Energy Board that made the decision with respect to the pipeline.

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** If my honourable friend is suggesting that the National Energy Board is somehow corruptible by somewhere else, then he has to stand and make that allegation. Maybe my honourable friend is saying that when Darcy McKeough was chairman of Union Gas and raising money for his party, he was somewhat more objective in these matters.

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** Does the member know what I say? I want to say this. I want to tell the member he is stretching so far on this matter that I say to him he does not have the guts to stand up and make a direct allegation. I think that if he has anything he should; but frankly, knowing my honourable friend, I would have expected some of his colleagues but not him to make unsubstantiated allegations in this regard, particularly when he understands the rules and particularly if he wants to start throwing mud. It can come back on him so easily because of his own involvement with all of these things.

#### EMPLOYMENT ADJUSTMENT

**Mrs. Cunningham:** My question is for the Premier. In response to a question put forth by my colleague the member for Nipissing (Mr. Harris) yesterday, he made reference to a skills development program called Transitions. This program, initiated on August 4, 1987, by his government, seeks to assist newly unemployed workers aged 45 and over in securing new employment through skills enhancement.

On April 1, 1988, barely eight months into the program, funds for this program were cut from \$14 million to \$8 million, and in the 1987 fiscal year the Ministry of Skills Development was only able to spend a whopping \$284,000 on the Transitions program, a program for older workers' retraining, a program which had a \$14-million budget. This year, so far, they have been able to spend \$715,000 of their \$8 million budget.

**Mr. Speaker:** Does the member have a question?

**Mrs. Cunningham:** Can the Premier explain why these funds are not being spent?

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** I think the honourable minister could help out the member.

**Hon. Mr. Curling:** The Transitions program, as the honourable member mentioned, is for older workers of 45 and over. There are special

guidelines under which people can be trained with a \$5,000 voucher.

The honourable member mentioned that the program is not being taken up and not being spent. There are many reasons for this, one being that the economy has demonstrated very strongly. Also, some people who have been laid off have taken the vouchers and have not spent those vouchers on training. They have a two-year period in which to respond to that \$5,000. It is their choice when they do so.

To respond to the member and to say why they are not taken up, it could be for that reason; and also, as I said, the economy is such that the layoffs are not as drastic as anticipated.

**Mrs. Cunningham:** I think everyone in this House should know that Statistics Canada revealed that there were 38,000 unemployed persons in Ontario aged 45 to 64 for the month of October, last month, 1988. There really clearly is a need.

Since this program started in 1987, a grand total of 1,787 workers have applied to this program, a program that this government said was going to help 6,500 per year. We have 38,000 unemployed workers now. This government is blaming the free trade deal. The minister cannot deliver the programs he has now, without a free trade deal, for people who are unemployed.

Can the minister explain why the program is so inadequate that it is not even reaching the people who need our help the most, and what he is going to do about it?

1430

**Hon. Mr. Curling:** I think the honourable member did not hear me in the first place. I will state again for her that we have seen the economy in a very good state. The program is in place for all those who take it up. The government has put this program in place; it is for those client groups to respond to that program. Therefore, if it is not taken up, are we saying we are going to force these individuals to do so?

They have other recourses, so to speak, to obtain other jobs. If the statistics say there are so many people who have been laid off and they have taken other jobs, it is not for us then to use the Transitions program in forcing it.

Again, they have two years in which to respond to it. Many of the training programs start at various times, and they may be awaiting that time when those programs are in place in which to start the training.

**Mrs. Cunningham:** Obviously, we are all interested in having our workforce employed.

There are 38,000 unemployed persons right now between the ages of 45 to 64. I think it is our responsibility to make certain that people do enter programs that the government thought were important to initiate in the first place. I am going to tell the minister that obviously the way the program is set up right now is not working.

Will the minister change the program so that we can clearly deliver the goods to the workers who need our help the most so that they can be employed?

[Applause]

**Hon. Mr. Curling:** I am very encouraged by the fact that the member asked that the program be changed. I am also encouraged that the Conservative members applauded that. Yesterday, in the House of Commons, the Liberals asked the federal government to expand the program for older worker adjustment, which addresses those 65 and over. Only a small sector of the population would have benefited from that. The federal government refused to do that. Even the encouragement from those members is not even seen to encourage their federal colleagues to do that.

**Mrs. Cunningham:** This is not federal money; this is Ontario money.

**Hon. Mr. Curling:** Our program addresses those 45 and over, targeted to training, while the POWA itself is addressed only to income. We are interested in retraining people so that they can attach themselves to worthwhile employment. I would say to the honourable members across the House to use the same energy to encourage the federal government to change POWA.

**Mrs. Cunningham:** There is no federal money involved, none at all, none whatsoever.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. New question.

#### LEAD IN DRINKING WATER

**Mr. B. Rae:** I am amazed that the Minister of Housing was not up on her feet announcing a change to the Ontario Building Code. She has the power to announce under its regulations that we will no longer permit under the building code the use of lead in any soldering that is done. I am particularly astounded when you consider that the latest information from the US Centers for Disease Control considers anything over 10 micrograms per decilitre as of serious concern in young children.

When the latest published information on Ontario children indicates that 52 per cent of children six and under exceed that standard, I wonder why the Minister of Housing would not



have been up on her feet today to announce a change in Ontario's building code. We can deal with it. We have the technology to deal with it. We do not have to use lead in soldering. Why would the minister not be up on her feet to announce that change right away?

**Hon. Ms. Hošek:** I am up on my feet right now to say that we have been working on this issue for quite a while, and therefore we are moving immediately—

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**Hon. Ms. Hošek:** If the gentlemen opposite do not want to hear the answer—the gentlemen opposite are only happy to be outraged, but they are not concerned about the health of our children.

We are moving immediately by order in council to amend the building code to prevent the use of solder containing more than two tenths of a per cent of lead. We can move to do that immediately by order in council, and we are doing that today.

**Mrs. Grier:** I certainly welcome the announcement that it is going to be done today. I think the supplementary is, is it not the case that the plumbing committee of the ministry has known for a year that lead in solder was causing problems with drinking water, and why has it taken until today and until the revelations of this problem by the CBC for the minister to make the decision to act?

**Hon. Ms. Hošek:** The building code has been in the process of being amended on this question of plumbing for quite a while, but we did not have the information about difficulty in the drinking water. Under normal circumstances, this whole area has been out for discussion to the concerned groups, including environmental groups, since August. None of them have raised this issue of safety. In fact, no one has raised the issue of safety until a few days ago. Because of the need to move quickly, we decided to move through order in council immediately.

The work has been going on for a while and it has been part of the consultation process since August. It has been out there for people to comment on because that is the normal process for amending the building code. We have been following that normal process. We are now speeding it up to deal with the urgency that has been raised.

#### PROPOSED HOSPITAL MERGER

**Mr. Eves:** I have a question for the Minister of Health. I would note that after question period

yesterday, the report of the proposed merger of the two hospitals we spoke of, Wellesley Hospital and Sunnybrook Medical Centre, was indeed finally delivered to the district health council, but only after question period yesterday—a coincidence, I suspect.

With respect to this proposed merger, can the minister tell us if her ministry is seriously considering spending over \$300 million of the taxpayers' money to merge two hospitals and at the same time eliminate over 232 active treatment beds?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** The member opposite has produced a report today in the House that is a recommendation to the minister supported by the boards of two very prestigious hospitals, the Wellesley Hospital and the Sunnybrook Hospital, as well as the University of Toronto.

I want to tell the member that the report has been received by the ministry, and I met with the chairmen of both boards, and others, as well as the dean of the faculty of medicine of the University of Toronto, to discuss the proposal. It is under review by the ministry, and I have to assure the member opposite that the ministry will take every opportunity to ask whatever questions are important and relevant prior to any recommendation going to our Treasurer (Mr. R. F. Nixon).

**Mr. Eves:** I asked the minister whether she would consider eliminating 232 active treatment beds from the system. She did not begin to respond to the question. I also pointed out that it was only after question period yesterday that her ministry gave the go-ahead to the two hospitals to release the report to the district health council, despite the fact that she told us yesterday and on numerous occasions how important district health councils are in the planning of health resources in the province.

Will the minister make a commitment in the House this afternoon that a thorough, independent review of this report will be done by the district health council, and that when that review is done, it will be made public immediately—in other words, she and her ministry will not sit on it—so that all members of the public and this Legislature can see what the recommendations of an independent review by the district health council are?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** I think it is important, in response to the member's question, to address two issues. First, at this time we are discussing with district health councils an expanded planning mandate. As he knows, the district health councils were established some 15 years ago by

the previous government to be advisory to the Minister of Health. At this time we are discussing an enhanced mandate in the planning area with the district health councils. That is question one.

However, the member does raise a very important point. When we discuss the fact that technologies are altering the way that medicine is practised, one of the points that was raised to me, in my discussions across the province, by physicians, by health planners, by economists and so forth, is that technology is allowing us the opportunity to provide services in many different ways. In fact, beds are no longer the benchmark for services being provided. Often services can be provided on an outpatient and ambulatory basis and enhance the level of service.

I would suggest to him that perhaps I could give him information that I have received which would suggest that beds are no longer simply the benchmark for services and that we have to look at innovative and creative ways of maintaining and enhancing the levels of service for the people of this province.

1440

#### ACQUIRED IMMUNE DEFICIENCY SYNDROME

**Mr. Sola:** My question is also to the Minister of Health. Last week an education and needle-exchange program to fight the spread of acquired immune deficiency syndrome among drug users was approved by Toronto's board of health. This program was developed in consultation with police Chief Jack Marks, the provincial Ministry of Health and the Addiction Research Foundation.

While our role is certainly not to encourage or condone lawbreakers I fully understand the need to prevent the transmission of AIDS, but I have definite concerns about the method being considered. Does the minister support this initiative, and what types of guidelines or conditions does the ministry plan to impose on such a program?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** As I mentioned yesterday in estimates when we had an important discussion about the public health challenge that is posed by AIDS, our response is twofold: (1) to stop the spread of this dreaded disease; and (2) to ensure compassionate care for those who have contracted the disease.

I think it is very important that the member and all members of this House know that the ministry, in fact, has taken an important role in trying to stop the transmission of this disease. We have participated on a committee with representatives of the city of Toronto to look at the

relationship between intravenous drug use and the transmission of AIDS.

He is correct that the ministry, at the present time, is reviewing a proposal from the Toronto board of health.

**Mr. Sola:** As a supplementary, the government has an obligation to provide a clear and consistent message. Various government departments must not work, or appear to be working, at cross-purposes.

Is the minister not concerned about the apparent message going out to the public? On the one hand, we have the member for Muskoka-Georgian Bay (Mr. Black) working on a special task force to fight drug use among students; on the other hand, is distributing needles to addicts not a tacit approval of this behaviour?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** I am aware that this is an extremely sensitive issue. Not only are intravenous drug users at risk when it comes to AIDS, but so are their partners. We know that intravenous drug use does lead to the transmission of this deadly disease. Experience from other jurisdictions has shown that needle exchange programs can be effective in certain circumstances. However, I have said in the House before and I will say again that any program should include an addiction component to provide counselling as well as assistance to those people who are presently intravenous drug users to help them get off drugs. As we look at a comprehensive strategy, I believe those are important components of any program that is proposed.

#### OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

**Mr. Mackenzie:** I have a question for the Minister of Labour. The Minister of Labour, if I can take him back to the Libbey Owens Ford plant in Lindsay for a moment, is aware that after the eight workers in that plant had their health pretty well wrecked, they were fired as soon as the company knew it.

The minister got himself and his ministry very much involved in that situation. The minister is also aware that eventually the company took back six of the eight workers, two of whom in the meantime had quit because of the conditions in the plant.

Can the minister tell us if part of that agreement and part of the work done by his ministry was that there would be no retaliation against the workers in that plant? That certainly is an understanding of the workers.

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** My understanding from my officials is that there was no agreement of the



sort that the member for Hamilton East refers to; that as a result of the Canadian Auto Workers and the local president and officials from the Ministry of Labour, the plant, Libbey Owens Ford, adopted a policy that workers in the situation those eight workers were in—that is, sensitive to isocyanates—would be fully reinstated and put on long-term disability payments representing 100 per cent of their wages, and that would continue until determinations had been made by the board.

I just want to add, though, that I would not expect that there would be any agreement that there would be no retaliations, because retaliations of any sort are against the law and the ministry would not in any way tolerate a situation where there were reprisals or retaliations against workers.

**Mr. Mackenzie:** I am glad the minister has said that they would not tolerate a situation where there were reprisals against the workers.

Can the minister then tell us what he is going to do in answer for the workers who are down at the Ontario Federation of Labour today and will be there tomorrow morning, the six workers who have now been fired in that plant: Kenny Hum, president of the local; Jackie Brown and Len Colp, both members of the safety and health committee that has been raising the concerns in that particular plant; Linda Woodman, who is the young woman who was largely responsible for the plant being organized two years ago; and Todd Richards, whose only problem seems to have been that the plant manager was told he would probably be one of the first who would refuse to work in an unsafe condition under the legislation?

All of these key people in the plant have been fired. The company flatly refuses to deal with any reinstatement. There are obviously cases going to the board on this. Can the minister tell us how he can sit there and allow this to happen, given the history of that particular situation to date?

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** I think it is completely unfair for the member for Hamilton East to suggest that I am just sitting here and allowing that sort of thing to happen. Indeed, that situation and other situations that we have been encountering were raised by me late in the evening last night with the secretary-treasurer of the Canadian Auto Workers, because it is a serious situation.

I just want to tell the member for Hamilton East three things. First of all, it is an offence against the Occupational Health and Safety Act in this province to take reprisal measures against workers who raise concerns about their own

health and safety, and it is the responsibility of my ministry to investigate such allegations and to proceed on the basis of what those investigations suggest.

Second, in the case of the workers the member for Hamilton East mentions, each one of those workers has now instigated a grievance, has lodged a grievance, which will be heard by an arbitrator, and those grievances are obviously being sponsored by the union.

Third, the question of reinstatement can be dealt with on an expeditious basis by the Ontario Labour Relations Board under application, which can be dealt with expeditiously.

My understanding is that the Canadian Auto Workers are currently considering the advisability of proceeding to the board. I would not want to make any comment on the case that would prejudice their application before the board or the grievance applications that will be before an arbitrator.

#### YORK REGION LAND DEVELOPMENT

**Mr. Cousens:** I have a question for the Premier. For the past several weeks, our party has been calling on his government to clear the air regarding the land development practices in York region.

Today a story is circulating on a federal probe into York region's land development practices. Another newspaper story alleges that the town of Vaughan staff are destroying documents which relate to the issue of development in the town. York region continues to receive intense media attention, which heightens the frustration and confusion for residents in the area.

I will ask the Premier again: Will he launch a public inquiry into these matters and once and for all lift the cloud of suspicion?

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** I think we have discussed this matter on several occasions in the House and with my honourable friend. I am not aware of those particular suggestions in today's newspaper, but as he knows, there is a police inquiry and I think that, as an independent group, they will come to the bottom of this matter very quickly. I think my honourable friend will be satisfied that that is the appropriate course of action.

**Mr. Cousens:** I am not satisfied. It has been said that a person is more influenced by what he suspects than by what he is told. In spite of the suspicions of the newspapers, I am satisfied that the administration in Vaughan is made up of honest, responsible, conscientious people, and

yet a black cloud of suspicion continues to surround these communities.

Too much has been unfolded. Too many suspicions are being allowed to stand, and yet the Premier sits back idly while residents in York region are left in the dark. What is he prepared to do today to begin to restore public confidence in our municipal planning process?

1450

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** I appreciate what the honourable member is saying. There are some people who just want to cast suspicions and dark clouds on other people, or draw unrelated facts together to give some unsubstantiated allegations about someone else. I am sure my honourable friend is familiar with that. I cannot think of any recent examples in the last half-hour, but my honourable friend will be aware of that as well.

We have debated this question at some length. It is our view, on the advice of the law officers of the crown, that the best approach is to have an independent police inquiry into this matter to look at any suggestions of illegality in this regard. It is our view and our hope that this will clear the air on the matter. If there is any criminality, it will isolate that, and they can move effectively and quickly in that regard.

My honourable friend is aware that people stand up regularly in this House and cast aspersions on others. Some use that power responsibly and others do not use it responsibly. That, perhaps, is one of the joys of living in a free society.

#### FEDERAL MEMBER'S COMMENTS

**Mr. Chiarelli:** My question is to the Premier, who is also Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs. Last week, the citizens of Ottawa-Carleton were both surprised and disgusted by the comments made by a prominent member of the Mulroney government concerning the federal Liberal sweep in eastern Ontario.

In an interview with the Ottawa Citizen, Don Blenkarn, the chairman of the federal finance committee, threatened: "If Ottawa voters felt neglected before, they don't know the meaning of the word. Why wouldn't you cut back on everything you could in Ottawa? Who's to care about a bunch of Ottawa public servants who lose their jobs?" That is an exact quote. The Mulroney government has been given the mandate through a democratic election to deal fairly and to listen—to those in areas with government representation.

At a time when current efforts are being made by other, more responsible individuals to heal

differences and get on with the job of fair and honest government in our country, what sort of message do such comments send to citizens about political morality in government?

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** I am aware of those comments because I was in Ottawa last Friday at a delightful luncheon, to which the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. B. Rae) and the leader of the third party were invited. I am sorry they could not make it.

**Mr. Sterling:** And every other MPP in the Ottawa area, save one.

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** We humbly apologize for that. We invited the member's leader and we would have thought he would normally have invited the member for Carleton (Mr. Sterling) in his stead, given the aspirations he has in that particular area. I apologize for that, and may I say how much we missed his leader on that occasion.

Let me just respond seriously for a moment. I know there was quite a violent reaction in the Ottawa area. The mayor expressed that quite vehemently, and frankly, I agree with the mayor. I do not believe in punishment-and-reward politics, whether a member is returned or not returned in a particular area. I think once one is elected, one has to be as dispassionate and fair as one can possibly be. I do not believe in politics that pits region against region, and to the extent that government programs exist, they have to be done fairly and dispassionately.

**Mr. Sterling:** I wish you did in the provincial sense.

Interjections.

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** I agree with my honourable friend from Ottawa. I think this kind of comment sends out the wrong kind of message about the political process. My friends opposite may scoff. If they support the words of Mr. Blenkarn in this respect, then they should stand up and say so, but if they do not like them, they should stand up and say they do not stand for this kind of politics. Frankly, I do not like it, the mayor did not like it, and I do not blame him for the very strong reaction he had.

**Mr. Sterling:** Why not do something for Ottawa for a change?

**Mr. Speaker:** Order; supplementary.

**Mr. Pouliot:** He doesn't get a supplementary for that, does he?

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. I must remind the members that they made the rules.



**Mr. Chiarelli:** I think the people of Ottawa-Carleton should be aware of the fact that the member for Carleton and the member for Leeds-Grenville (Mr. Runciman) apparently support the statements of Mr. Blenkarn.

As I stated earlier, Mr. Blenkarn is chairman of the high-profile House of Commons finance committee, which is influential in formulating federal government policy. Given such disparaging and irresponsible comments by its chairman, will the Premier assure the thousands of citizens in the Ottawa area who are federal public servants that the provincial government will do everything in its power to encourage the federal government to act responsibly on this issue?

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** I regret the kind of statement Mr. Blenkarn made, because I think it reflects ill on the political process and the integrity members of this House try to bring to the process.

That being said, there is a substantive issue at stake here and that is the question of the space agency and the location thereof. That matter has become a divisive political symbol, as my honourable friend is aware. It has been kicked back and forth. What we are trying to do is to turn that, from our point of view, into a win-win situation. We believe it should be in the national capital region. We should be using the strengths of Quebec and Ontario together.

It seems to me that after a particularly divisive election, the nature of which we have had, which had regional implications—some sought to pit one region against another—we should now be using every device we have to bring the nation back together and try to build symbols of unity. I think this can be one, and we have put forward our views in that matter. To have the suggestion that any region of the country would be punished because of the way it voted in the last campaign or in a provincial campaign, I think demeans the entire process and nobody in this House would want to associate himself with those remarks.

#### ABANDONED URANIUM MINE

**Mrs. Grier:** My question is for the Minister of the Environment. For some months now, residents in the Bancroft area and in the watershed surrounding that area have been making the minister aware of their concern about abandoned uranium mines. I would like to ask the minister specifically about Madawaska Mines Ltd. Can the minister tell the House if he is satisfied that Madawaska Mines Ltd. has fulfilled all the obligations under the decommissioning licence issued to it by the Atomic Energy Control Board?

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** Our ministry officials have been in conversation with the federal officials, who have some considerable jurisdiction in this matter, to determine the record of the company in terms of its decommissioning. A number of residents, as the member has indicated, have communicated with me their concerns that the final product in fact should be one that is environmentally satisfactory.

In my ministry discussions with the federal officials, we are endeavouring to bring about those circumstances. As the member knows, it involves a couple of ministries of the provincial government and a couple of ministries of the federal government. I hope that together we can bring about a resolution of this matter that is satisfactory to all.

**Mrs. Grier:** I hope the minister is not going to delay with it because the decommissioning licence of AECB, which says that a report on the decommissioning shall be given to the Minister of the Environment at least three months before the end of the fifth year of the monitoring phase, specifically involves his ministry in that decommissioning, and the end of the five-year monitoring phase is tomorrow, November 30, 1988. So if all the minister is doing is being in discussion, he had better act pretty fast this afternoon.

Is the minister aware that if he does not act very fast, then by tomorrow AECB can walk away from this problem? Has the minister any guarantee that the very sensible proposal put forward by the residents and by Cairns, the Canadian Institute for Radiation Safety, for a joint project to clean up this area is going to be funded? What will the minister do if the monitoring is not satisfactory?

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** All of these matters are under review and consideration and discussion by our officials and the federal officials. A problem, as the member knows, exists in these circumstances and it is one we all want to work on. The problem is when there is a split jurisdiction dealing with it.

In the federal domain, for instance, we recognize that as soon as we mention the word "radioactivity," the federal government certainly has paramount responsibility in this regard. As the member knows, that dates back to during the Second World War or even before that, when there was development of nuclear energy and nuclear weapons. The federal government took responsibility for it and jealously guarded that responsibility for a number of years.

The Ministry of the Environment and probably the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Health

and others have been in constant discussion with them and we hope the matter can be resolved to the satisfaction of the people in the area and the people of the province. Certainly, we will press the federal government and the federal agency to reach that kind of agreement which will be beneficial to all.

1500

### AMBULANCE SERVICES

**Mr. Jackson:** My question is to the Minister of Health regarding the ongoing, unacceptably high risks that Halton and Peel residents have been subjected to as a result of the now 110-day-old ambulance strike, which the minister refuses to help solve. We have repeatedly brought to the minister's attention cases of two and three times higher response times for ambulances, and higher levels of risk. Today, I have been made aware that patients are being forced to double up on their way to the hospital.

How would she, as Minister of Health, like it if she was being rushed to hospital and then was told the ambulance was going to make a detour and make another stop, and that she would be asked to roll over and make room in the ambulance for another patient? Does the minister think that is an acceptable level of risk and an appropriate way to run the ambulance service for any citizen in this province?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** The member's categorization of events is totally inaccurate, false and is not an accurate categorization of somebody in an emergency situation. It is very common in fact, in nonemergency situations, to have more than one patient in an ambulance. That happens all the time. However, when a patient is in a life-threatening situation on his or her way to hospital, the ambulance does not stop.

**Mr. Jackson:** So the minister is not prepared to roll over.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** Get your facts straight.

**Mr. Jackson:** In fact, we have the facts straight. We have cases. The member for Oakville South (Mr. Carrothers) has a drug overdose case that waited nearly half an hour. We have another Liberal member with a case of a child with a multiple fracture; nearly half an hour.

When is the minister going to take responsibility as Minister of Health and stop treating this as simply a labour issue, when hundreds of thousands of people in Halton and Peel are being subjected to unacceptable levels of risk? She is playing Russian roulette with our health system

and she had better get involved before there is another tragedy on the floor of this Legislature.

Again, when will the minister, in concert with the Minister of Labour (Mr. Sorbara), get these parties back to the bargaining table and resolve this strike so that the risk level for ambulance service in our communities in Halton and Peel is back to acceptable levels?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** I ask the member from the Halton area to categorize the situation fairly, appropriately and responsibly. He knows there is a very big difference between a response to a life-threatening emergency and to a nonemergency situation. He also knows that the situation is being monitored by the ministry and that I have assured him on numerous occasions that there is no risk to the public.

### STUDENT HOUSING

**Mr. Owen:** I have a question for the Minister of Colleges and Universities. Last winter, in the Legislature and also outside the Legislature, I approached the minister again and again about the need for residences for community colleges in southern Ontario. I was very pleased that some weeks ago the minister was able to announce that her ministry would be proceeding with this type of program. But in Barrie, the housing crisis continues and we continue to have problems accommodating the students at the Barrie Georgian College campus.

My question to the minister is, what sort of funding, what sort of timing is contemplated with regard to this housing problem for the students of Georgian College in that community?

**Hon. Mrs. McLeod:** I appreciate the fact that the honourable member did raise this concern with me, as did a number of other people in the House; in fact, it was a concern for a number of colleges. I too was pleased to be able to announce earlier this fall that we were changing the long-standing policy which had permitted only northern colleges to build residences.

Specifically in terms of funding, we are making available to the colleges \$100 million in Canada pension plan funds at lower than market rates to assist them in the financing of residences. The colleges have, quite obviously, been informed of the change in policy, and their requests for approval to proceed with the building of residences will be processed as soon as the requests come in. I indicate that I have not had a formal request from Georgian College at this point.

**Mr. Owen:** The minister has visited the campus and she is aware that the first and only



automotive centre in all of Canada has been developed there. It has been done with a combination of moneys from the government, but also with a great deal of input from the private sector. I am wondering if the minister has had an opportunity to look at the possibility of that same combination being explored with regard to residences at the community college level.

**Hon. Mrs. McLeod:** The member mentioned the co-operation between Georgian College and the automotive industry. That is a very fine example of that kind of co-operation. I think it is interesting that in Barrie too there is a private developer who has built a residence for the use of Georgian College students right across from the college. I think that is another existing example of that kind of co-operation.

Certainly, colleges are permitted under this new policy to enter into agreements with private developers for the building of residences. They are also quite clearly free to use fund-raising to supplement the funding of a residence.

#### CASE OF CHARLES PRUDENT

**Mr. Wildman:** I have a question of the Attorney General regarding the fact that Charles Prudent of Schreiber, an individual who was found guilty of two counts of gross indecency in 1986 in Winnipeg and subsequently served time and was charged in December 1987 with two further counts of sexual assault on young girls, was released on December 29, 1987, with conditions for a preliminary hearing in May 1988. That hearing was then postponed until September 1988. In October 1988, he was again arrested for sexual assault of an eight-year-old girl in Schreiber, was released after a show cause hearing and has still not been brought to trial.

Can the minister investigate and determine why it has taken so long, almost one year, for this individual to be brought to trial? Can he explain why an individual like this, who has been found guilty and served time in the past and obviously appears to have problems, has been released, even though he is not maintaining the conditions upon which the release depended?

**Hon. Mr. Scott:** As the honourable member knows, I will be glad to look into that. I am not familiar with the facts. The reason the court granted bail or release is a matter I do not know at the moment, but I will undertake to find that out. I will also inquire into the reason the adjournments occurred and get back to him as quickly as I can.

**Mr. Wildman:** Apparently one of the reasons for the adjournments was that the individual who

is being charged had a heart condition and was hospitalized at one point. But in September, he was charged with breach of the undertaking. In October, he was again charged with breach of his undertaking and yet was still released from custody, again with further conditions, and as I have said, was again charged with another offence of a similar nature in October. Surely this kind of individual should be brought to trial as quickly as possible and should not be free to commit the same kind of offence again.

**Hon. Mr. Scott:** I will be glad to look into that. As the honourable member knows but perhaps forgets, I am not the boss of the judges in the province. They are independent under our rule, and it is a very good rule under our Constitution that gives independent judges. Decisions about bail or release are made by judges.

I will be glad to look into it and see what the facts are, but I know the honourable member would not want to hold me responsible for the otherwise excellent conduct of our bench. Agreed?

**Mr. Wildman:** To be frank, I just want to protect the kids in the area.

#### SENIOR CITIZENS' TAX GRANTS

**Mr. McCague:** To the Minister of Revenue, I have a quote here, "It is the government's belief that seniors deserve special relief from provincial retail sales tax." If the minister really does believe that, and that is a quote from him, why did he not increase the seniors' tax grant by 14.3 per cent, the same amount as he increased the retail sales tax?

1510

**Hon. Mr. Grandmaitre:** I am glad that the member realizes what the Ministry of Revenue is doing for senior citizens and that good programs have been introduced. Maybe I should remind the member that last year we increased the property tax credit program to seniors by \$100. It is now up to \$600 a year. I think this is a great move. Other programs were introduced for senior farmers through the Ministry of Agriculture and Food. I think this government is responding to the needs of every senior citizen in this province.

#### INTRODUCTION OF BILL

#### INCOME TAX AMENDMENT ACT

Hon. Mr. Grandmaitre moved first reading of Bill 193, An Act to amend the Income Tax Act.

**Mr. Speaker:** All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion the ayes have it.

Motion agreed to.

#### MOTION TO SET ASIDE ORDINARY BUSINESS

Mr. Mackenzie moves that the ordinary business of the House be set aside to discuss a matter of urgent public importance requiring immediate consideration;

namely, the refusal of the Liberal government to honour its responsibility for and its commitments to working people in the area of job protection and labour adjustment—specifically, in the face of two plant closures announced within the last week, its refusal to do more than to pass the legislative buck to the federal government, even though jurisdiction for employment standards, labour relations and pensions is provincial; and its refusal, three and a half years after making the commitment in the 1985 accord that brought it to power, to "reform job security legislation, including notice and justification of layoffs and plant shutdowns...."

**Mr. Speaker:** The motion was received in time and therefore is in order. I will listen to the member for Hamilton East and representatives of the other two parties for up to five minutes.

**Mr. Mackenzie:** The urgency of the motion just read is underlined by the Tory win in the recent federal election. Many of us believe that Mr. Mulroney has sold out our country and the best that we have seen from the Premier (Mr. Peterson) was tough talk that flailed away with actions that had all the power and persuasion of wet noodles.

Ontario workers know from the Premier's pathetic performance on this issue that he cannot be trusted. I can recall his saying prior to his election that there would be no deal unless at least six commitments were made, and they dealt with a number of areas, including the auto pact, dispute settlement and countervail. None of these conditions were met and what followed was really a coward's retreat after the election.

After the federal election, as we saw in this House the other day, the Premier totally dropped the ball and could not wait to get back into bed with the Bullocks and Browns and his chamber of commerce friends. Indeed, he is so far into their pockets, he should worry about choking to death on the lint.

The Premier has had the report on plant closures by the standing committee on resources development before him since back in June 1987. None of its actions or recommendations have been acted on, even though the concern was obvious, the work done by the committee was extensive and certainly the recommendations made were not radical.

In addition to that, the Premier of this province put his signature on an accord in May 1985 which said—and these are some of the things that were promised as a condition of support so that the Liberals could form a government—"Reform of job security legislation, including notice and justification of layoffs and plant shutdowns and improved severance legislation." It also covered "private pension reform based on the recommendations of the Ontario select committee on pensions."

Once again, nothing happened; and it proved, if nothing else, that the Premier's work on this document was not worth the paper that it was written on.

Now, following several years of corporate rationalization which has cost us many jobs and given us all the advance warning we needed, the moment of truth approaches. Already we have seen, since the election, three plants announce their closure: Gillette Canada and PPG Canada here and Jarman shoes in Quebec.

The clear evidence of downsizing and the potential loss of hundreds of branch plants is upon us, and what is the Premier's response to my leader's questions as to how he will move to protect jobs and communities? He says, as he did in this House, I believe just yesterday, he does not want to enact punitive legislation.

The Premier's concern is obvious: protect the companies; no legislation that puts any responsibility on their shoulders for the human wreckage from lost jobs and reduced pensions; nothing punitive for business. But it is another thing for workers in the province; with workers, the decisions that business makes can be as punitive as hell, and it bothers the Premier and the Liberal government not one whit.

Without legislation to protect our people from the very real harm many will suffer as a result of free trade, this government is sending a very real message to all Ontarians: Working people are not nearly as important as business. Workers can expect no help from the Peterson Liberals in Ontario.

The need for this debate is urgent and overwhelming. Action on additional worker protection, plant closing justifications, addition-



al severance, workers' benefit and pension protection and retraining and occupational adjustment programs cannot wait or be fluffed off to the feds as long as we are on this suicidal free trade course.

In addition, I might say that the voters in Ontario are seeing a graphic example of how this government can destroy the principle of honesty and integrity in public service. Certainly that is the message that is going out very, very clearly to workers across the province when we see the recommendations that have been made by standing committees of this Legislature in an accord signed by the Premier and then see that he is not willing to move on any of these recommendations and indeed says he does not want to take punitive action. There sure as blazes is punitive action being taken against workers in Ontario, and this government simply has to move.

**Mr. Brandt:** My party would like to join in support of the resolution that has been put forward, in that we share the concerns of the New Democratic Party with respect to the lack of action on the part of the current government as it relates to providing adequate assistance and adequate programs of help for workers who do suffer layoffs.

We do, however, want to part company with the member for Hamilton East (Mr. Mackenzie) and other spokesmen from the New Democratic Party if in fact they want to direct, as the last speaker did, all layoffs from now until for ever as a direct consequence of signing a free trade agreement. I would remind members of this House that there have been layoffs virtually on a weekly basis throughout this province, as there have been plant openings and expansions that have occurred.

Our concern is for any worker who is laid off, irrespective of what the reason might happen to be, whether it is as a result of an adjustment under free trade or an adjustment that takes place in a global economy with rapidly changing conditions that are going to affect Canada, the United States, the European common market and other trading allies we have; the fact of the matter still is that when a worker is laid off it is a very devastating and debilitating kind of experience. The worker truly deserves to have and should have the kind of assistance government can provide.

1520

It is interesting to note the rhetoric of the current government as it relates to the whole question of where its responsibilities lie. My colleague the member for London North (Mrs.

Cunningham) has raised the question in this House with the Minister of Skills Development (Mr. Curling), as an example, about the lack of action on the Transitions program. She has questioned the minister as to why this government is not doing more to be effective in that particular regard.

My colleague the member for Nipissing (Mr. Harris) has raised the question about the kind of adjustment programs required for older laid-off workers, those workers who are particularly susceptible not only to layoffs but also to difficulties in finding future work opportunities. Again, this government has done very little in that respect and has fallen far short of its responsibilities.

There is in fact a committee which has been set up at the federal level, and although there are extremists in the whole discussion on the free trade matter, I would like to bring to the attention of this House that those who have a fair and balanced mind on the question will recognize that not only will there be layoffs which occur, with or without free trade, but also there will be expansions.

I would like to mention one in today's paper which will result in hundreds of jobs for Ontario, and that is Canadian Thermos Products which is moving part of its operations from the United States into Canada. We will benefit very directly as a result of the new jobs which will come from that particular decision.

The fact of the matter still remains that when the government of Ontario tries to place all of the responsibility on the federal government for layoffs when, in fact, as my colleagues in the New Democratic Party have pointed out, employment standards, labour relations and pensions are all provincial areas of responsibility, it is shirking its responsibility by not joining in with an effort to make any layoffs which occur, for whatever reason, as effective in terms of the workers' assistance programs as is possible.

The de Grandpré committee, which has been set up by the federal government, is one such activity that has been set up to assist workers, and I think the government of Ontario has a very direct responsibility to join in with the findings of that particular committee to determine exactly what it is the province can and should be doing when adjustment programs are necessary. I simply do not feel the government of Ontario can take the attitude that it can wash its hands of this whole thing in some fashion and say it has no responsibility whatever.

I would ask the members on that side of the House: Without a free trade agreement, and there have been, as they well know, layoffs which occurred long before free trade was ever a discussion in this country, was it not at that time a responsibility of the government of Ontario to pitch in and help wherever possible?

Who is going to make the Solomon-like decisions in the cases we have before us as to whether new expansions and new opportunities are a result of free trade or not a result of free trade? Whatever the conditions are, the government of Ontario has a responsibility and this motion very clearly points that out.

**Hon. Mr. Conway:** I have been reviewing the words of the motion standing in the name of the member for Hamilton East and listening with care, as always, to his comments and the comments just concluded by the leader of the third party.

Let me say at the outset that we as a government certainly will be prepared this afternoon to debate this question, simply because we think the record of the government in respect of these matters affected by the most recent national election and the very likelihood that the free trade agreement, initialled almost a year ago, will in fact become the law of the land in the not too distant future—we feel, as a government, that there are important issues that must be addressed.

Quite frankly, the Premier has indicated, I think with eloquence and with effect, that while we do have responsibilities and we accept the responsibilities that are ours as a provincial government, it is absolutely clear that the government of Canada, having sponsored this deal, having fought with great vigour in the recent national election campaign for its passage, must accept its responsibility, particularly in the critical area of adjustment policy.

As the Premier has indicated, there is and has been a commission headed by Mr. de Grandpré that is at work in this area. We want, as a provincial government, to repeat that we have no intention of relieving the government of Canada of its obligations to accept its responsibilities in this very important area of all of the adjustment that will be occasioned by virtue of the passage of the free trade deal.

I want to say to the member for Hamilton East that this government has a very good record in the areas about which he has expressed concern. I think, for example, of the motion's interest in the whole question of notice and severance policy. Under the leadership of this Premier, this

jurisdiction, Ontario, has the most stringent notice and severance policy to be found anywhere in Canada or in the United States.

We think that is a very good thing and are quite prepared to debate with the member for Hamilton East and the leader of the third party our responsibility and accomplishments in the past and our intentions in the future.

My colleague the Minister of Skills Development is here. I know he will be anxious to participate in the debate this afternoon, as will the member for Mississauga West (Mr. Mahoney), who is the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology. I know he is going to want to put before the assembly the views and intentions and the very considerable policy achievements of that ministry in the Ontario government with respect to the whole question of preparing the Ontario economy for the challenges that lie ahead.

I want to repeat that the Peterson government has taken a number of initiatives over the last three and a half years to prepare Ontario and to prepare various sectors of the Ontario economy for the challenge that lies ahead. We have much to point to by way of accomplishment. To be sure, there is more to be done and we intend to do it.

While we have accomplished much and while we intend to accomplish much more, we do not intend to absolve the government of Canada of its responsibility. I would not want any of our colleagues in the assembly or any in the viewing audience this afternoon to get a wrong impression. The Prime Minister of Canada, his colleagues at the national level and his friends here in the provincial Legislature have spared no effort, have shied away from nothing in their praise of this free trade agreement.

The people of Canada have spoken. The Prime Minister of Canada and the Progressive Conservative Party of Canada have received a mandate and enough approval for this Reagan-Mulroney free trade deal to proceed; and proceed it will. But they must, as Conservatives here and in Ottawa, accept the good and the bad. They cannot expect the government of Ontario to help them with the adjustment and to shoulder a difficulty that we have pointed to. So the debate this afternoon will undoubtedly proceed.

**Mr. Speaker:** I have listened very carefully to the three members who have spoken. I am sure that all members have done the same.

According to standing order 37(d), I will put the question: Shall the debate proceed?



Motion agreed to.

## EMPLOYMENT ADJUSTMENT

### LA RECONVERSION DE LA MAIN-D'OEUVRE

**Mr. Speaker:** Do any members wish to participate in the debate? The Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. B. Rae:** I accept the encouragement from the member for Ottawa West (Mr. Chiarelli). I am not used to receiving it. I appreciate very much the chance to participate in the debate.

I think that in the dynamic that has unfolded over the last year and a half, we now understand exactly what the game plan of this Liberal government really is. It was, first of all, obviously to play dead on the question of free trade as soon as the last provincial election was over. I think that has been clear from that day to this.

1530

Now, if I may say so, with the almost invisible participation of the Premier in the last federal election and the participation of the Premier in this great reconciliation with Mr. Bourassa on the question of free trade, we have a clear indication from him: "Fine, the election is over. I have the choice that I want. My brother has won in Willowdale, Mr. Mulroney has won in Ottawa and that is all I wanted to accomplish in the first place. Now we can get on with things."

We now see unfolding day after day in this Legislature, and again today in the speech by the House leader, the position that has been taken by the provincial government. The position is quite clear: "If there is any problem that is happening in this province, blame Mulroney, blame Ottawa." He is ideally positioned to do just that.

I might add, in addition to that perspective, that the other clear reality in this place—it has been true since September 1987—is that this government has basically shut down operations for the duration. They will shut down operations, I would think, for two-and-a-half to three-and-a-half years, depending on when they decide to call the next provincial election.

Then, just as took place under the Tories between 1981 and 1985, just as we saw with other Tory governments in this province and, indeed, as we saw with the Mulroney government, we will suddenly see emerging in 1990 or 1991 an array of things that they promised to do two or three years ago and that now suddenly will become timely.

Whoever is occupying the position of Minister of Labour will suddenly produce responses to the Donner report on overtime and the Ianni report on pensions and early retirement. We will suddenly find responses from the Ministry of Community and Social Services with respect to child care. We will suddenly find answers with respect to pensions. We will suddenly find some responses, many of which will be purely cosmetic. Nevertheless, that will be the approach.

I am here to tell the government that, as much as it might trouble them to hear it from us, they will hear a consistent message: that is, that they were elected in 1987 to do something, that they are responsible for the employee-employer relationship in this province in a legal, constitutional sense and that they cannot ignore their responsibilities to legislate for this province with respect to the protection of the rights of employees. That is basically what this is all about.

We are never going to get a company saying, "This layoff is taking place because of free trade," or "This part of our operations is being affected by free trade but this part has nothing to do with free trade."

Everybody here knows—and the Premier's Council has said it—that we are in for big changes in this province whether or not the free trade agreement was in place. The critical question for this province is not that the Premier wants to talk with the federal government about his vision, which is what he said yesterday to the press. What we need is clear leadership from this government in areas where they have responsibility, where they have the obligation to do something and where they have the legal obligation to act on behalf of employees.

**Mr. Chiarelli:** Whom are you going to tax?

**Mr. B. Rae:** If I may just continue with the member for Ottawa West, perhaps he would like to hear.

Perhaps he would like to talk to the workers from Best Outerwear Ltd., a company that is involved in the garment trade not too far from this place. Perhaps the member would like to go down and talk to the employees of Best Outerwear and explain to them why they are out of pocket some \$25,000 because their company went bankrupt.

This government has been in possession for three years of a report that clearly stated what it should be doing in defence of workers who are not paid their wages by bankrupt companies. The member for Ottawa West may want to talk to those workers who showed me their time cards a

couple of months ago. They showed the wages they had earned, in some cases as much as \$1,000, which were not paid by their employer.

The question is not so much what can the Premier argue about with the Prime Minister? The much more important question is, what is the balance going to be between worker and capital? That is the question. The question in this province is, who is going to pay the price for change? Is it workers who are going to pay the price, or is it that capital and labour are going to be made to work together so that those prices and burdens can be shared effectively?

That is the central question. The member for Ottawa West may not like to hear this. He may be so determined to defend employers and the interests of capital that he is not prepared to listen. But I say that when workers are out of pocket \$25,000 and the banks and the creditors are going away with that money, there is something wrong with our bankruptcy and our severance laws in this province.

I say that when workers at 53 and 54 cannot get early retirement and cannot get a guarantee of bridging into their private plan, there is something wrong when there are pension surpluses in this province estimated to be as much as \$40 billion. The member for Ottawa West may be happy with a situation where workers end up with nothing and there is a surplus of \$40 billion and companies can go on pension contribution holidays, but we in this party are not satisfied with that, and those are the questions the Premier has to raise.

The hard fact is, yes, let there be a federal-provincial conference, but the Premier of this Ontario has to put up or shut up with respect to what he is prepared to do in his own backyard, in his own bailiwick and in his own province and jurisdiction with respect to steps and laws he can take himself.

He cannot simply point the finger at the federal government. I say to my friend the member for Ottawa West that if he knew anything at all about this situation, he would recognize that if Brian Mulroney were to move in the area of pensions, if he were to move in the area of severance, he would be ruled unconstitutional by a court in this country.

Therefore, the only government that can act when it comes to pensions, when it comes to severance, when it comes to notice, when it comes to shutdowns, when it comes to what happens to workers in this province, that responsibility belongs clearly and categorically with the government of Ontario.

Le gouvernement provincial a ses propres responsabilités, et il nous est tellement important de vraiment comprendre la situation. Oui, nous avons un gouvernement conservateur qui s'est engagé à l'accord Mulroney-Reagan sur le libre-échange. Mais la question est: qui va payer les coûts du changement? M. Mulroney a parlé, au cours de la campagne électorale, du problème de savoir comment gérer le changement; ça, c'est un problème. Mais comment vivre le changement et y survivre? Cela, c'est le problème des travailleurs de cette province.

Le grand défi pour notre gouvernement est de créer un juste équilibre de l'intérêt du capital et de l'intérêt des travailleurs, des gens ordinaires. Je dois dire que, jusqu'à maintenant, on n'a pas trouvé le juste équilibre. Maintenant, les travailleurs peuvent travailler 20 ou 30 ans dans une compagnie. Ils n'ont pas de pension, ils n'ont pas de protection. Ils sont mis à la porte avec deux, trois, quatre semaines de préavis.

Ce n'est pas acceptable. C'est ça qui doit changer. C'est pourquoi nous disons que c'est la loi provinciale qui doit changer puisque c'est de la juridiction provinciale qu'il est question. C'est pourquoi nous disons que nous avons maintenant l'occasion d'agir et aussi le devoir d'agir: le devoir d'agir de la part de nos citoyens qui seront, inévitablement, touchés par ces changements. C'est pourquoi nous devons changer les lois de cette province en ce qui concerne les droits des travailleurs, les pensions, les mises à pied et les fermetures d'usine.

Nous avons la capacité d'agir, nous en avons aussi l'obligation, et c'est pourquoi nous proposons ce débat.

**Mr. Harris:** The motion before us speaks to the refusal of the Liberal government to honour its responsibilities and its commitments, of "its refusal to do more than to pass the legislative buck to the federal government" and of the failure of this government to live up to its accord commitments.

The motion alludes to what we in this party see as the real emergency facing the people of this province, and that is a crisis of leadership: an emergency created by a huge majority government without an agenda, an emergency created by a government that likes to pass bucks nearly as much as it likes to tax them and that likes to spend more time trying to fix the blame than it does to fix the problem.

**1540**

We understand the sense of frustration that caused the official opposition to introduce this motion. We understand that it is unacceptable for



the Premier to play Pontius Pilate, simply to wash his hands, give an imperial shrug and say: "It is not my problem. It is not my responsibility."

Last fall the governing party campaigned with the slogan, "Leadership that works." Since then, all it has delivered is leadership that wimps out.

This emergency debate is necessary today not because of the free trade agreement, not because of federal programs but because the arrogance of this government is exceeded only by its complacency and because we have a government with plenty of seats and no ideas. Every member on this side of the House recognizes that in its short tenure in office, this government has established a long record of breaking its commitments and of ignoring its responsibilities.

Consider, for example, the commitment the Premier made last year to veto free trade if it did not satisfy six bottom-line conditions. While we in this party supported the free trade agreement and disagreed totally with the Premier's position, we fully expected after that election to see him fight long and hard to block the free trade agreement. But his commitment to block the deal evaporated along with his alleged veto and his famous no-deal conditions.

When this party was advising this government to get ready for free trade, to suit up and get into the game instead of standing on the sidelines, all the government had to offer by way of response was to wave its phantom veto: "It is the federal government's responsibility."

Now we find that the emperor has no clothes and the government has no idea about what to do next, except to look around for someone to blame for its own inaction. Now we find that the sum and substance of the Liberal strategy is for the Premier to advertise in the papers that he thinks it might be a good idea to hold a federal-provincial powwow on the issue after ignoring overture after overture: federal-provincial agreements, federal-provincial co-operation from the de Grandpré Advisory Council on Adjustment. Now he thinks this would be a good idea.

From our perspective, the Liberal boast, "We have done what we said we would do," can only be explained as an exercise in partisan hyperbole or the product of a very selective memory which has allowed this Liberal government to forget a long list of unkept promises and commitments.

For instance, the motion speaks of the government's refusal, three and a half years after making the commitment in the 1985 accord that brought it to power, to "reform job security

legislation, including notice and justification of layoffs and plant shutdowns."

Now, I confess that my party might have serious differences of opinion with our friends in the official opposition about how such measures should be brought in. However, we do appreciate why, in looking at the government record, they would feel more than a little miffed on this point. Having put the Liberals in power, they no doubt expected a better payoff than Bill 128, which completed a process started by the former Progressive Conservative government to protect workers from any negative impact caused by changes to the unemployment insurance system, the legislation introduced in June on severance pay and notice provisions that they described as "pathetically inadequate." This is but one of a number of the accord commitments that the Liberal government made but has not kept.

We could add the commitments to broaden the political rights of the public service, to make day care a public service, to reform the appointments process, Workers' Compensation Board reform and indexed pensions to the list of accord commitments still wandering around in limbo policy. The political landscape of this province is littered with these unkept, half-kept and half-baked Liberal commitments.

I am sure all members recall the pledge to phase out Ontario health insurance plan premiums. How about the commitment to increase the province's share of school costs to 60 per cent over five years? That must have slipped their minds when they were writing the campaign ads.

The list goes on and on: denticare; QCs; a \$300-million education program became a \$60-million program; northern and small business tax credits; lower auto insurance premiums; an environmental youth corps which turned out to be a third of what was promised—all commitments that the Liberal government has refused to honour.

As for our friends' dismay over the Liberal government's buck-passing, surely they recognize by now that this government is rapidly becoming a master at avoiding accepting responsibility.

Faced with a problem in health care, this government blames the doctors and the hospital administrators. Unable to deal with Sunday shopping, this government takes the chicken way out and it passes the buck to the municipalities. Now we can apparently add labour force adjustment and retraining to the list of things for which this government says, "I'm not responsible."



If our friends across the aisle really believe, then they should wind up the Ministry of Skills Development. Why do they not just pack it in and find something useful for the minister to do with himself and for the people of Ontario?

At this rate, in a few more years the government will not be responsible for anything. Municipal governments and the federal government will be responsible for everything. The people of Ontario will be spared the expense and trouble of maintaining a government here at Queen's Park. It might not be a bad idea, compared to what we have now.

The government talks a good game about making this province globally competitive, about retooling our industrial base and providing for a skilled and flexible workforce; but as so often happens, the reality falls short of the rhetoric.

This whole effort to lead Ontario into the 21st century is supposedly being spearheaded by the Premier's Council and the Premier's other pet project, the technology fund. However, the government has moved slowly or not at all in terms of implementing the recommendations made by the council itself in its first volume, called *Competing in the New Global Economy*, and, to my knowledge, has begun to move on only three of the 17 recommendations in that report. This is the best measure of this government's commitment to meeting the major economic and the technological challenges that are facing this province.

The statements made by this government over the past few days make it clear it has only two items on its agenda, fed-bashing and buck-passing, and if the Liberals of Ontario believe that fed-bashing and buck-passing are going to help us compete in a new global economy, they are wrong. If they think the people in this province are going to be fooled into thinking that political gamesmanship is a substitute for policy, I say I think they are wrong. If they think they can simply wash their hands and shrug off their responsibilities completely, they are wrong. I know that we on this side of the House would be more than happy to remind them that they were elected to govern. They were elected to lead this province, not to search for scapegoats and for excuses.

**Mr. Chiarelli:** Why don't you quote Don Blenkarn?

**Mr. Harris:** I could quote Don Blenkarn if the member wants. You know, the member for Ottawa West is a perfect example of why the MPP salaries cannot be increased, because the Premier looks around his caucus and he says,

"These turkeys aren't worth any more than we're paying them."

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** I am pleased to join in this debate. I have listened very carefully both to the remarks of the member for Hamilton East and to the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. B. Rae) leading up to the debate and beginning the debate and, of course, to the remarks of the member from Nipissing.

I want to say in beginning my own remarks that I am simply aghast at the comments of the Leader of the Opposition when he suggested in his remarks that somehow the strategy of the Liberal Party of Ontario and of the Premier of Ontario during the recent election campaign, so centrally focused on free trade, was to play dead. Indeed, that comment was shown to be untrue last night at the very convention that the member for Hamilton East referred to when one of the leading labour leaders in this province acknowledged that his party, the New Democratic Party, simply was left at the starting gate in terms of the debate on free trade in this country during the seven weeks leading up to November 21.

**1550**

Mr. Gerard, director of the steelworkers in Ontario, said quite honestly and openly that it was too bad the New Democratic Party in Canada had the issue taken away from it by the Liberal Party of Canada. Indeed, in my own experience it was Liberal members in this House who were out campaigning on a regular basis trying to focus the issue on what was so central to the future of this province and this country, the terms of a trade agreement that has so very many weaknesses in it and leaves Ontario and Canada so very vulnerable.

We are indeed looking now at the prospects of a new trading environment. We in this province and in this country will be facing competitive pressures far different and far more severe than those we have faced in the past. We as a province and we as a nation must, of course, now respond because the decision has been made. The election is past. The Tories have their majority and they are resolved to pursue that agreement and to pursue it with vigour.

The question now arises as to how Ontario and how Canada should proceed. I want to tell my friends in the official opposition and remind my friends in the third party, if they care to listen, and apparently they do not, that the government of Ontario over the past three years has taken some of the most progressive steps in ensuring that working people in this province work within a regulatory framework designed to protect



them, particularly in cases where plants are about to close or where there are major layoffs about to happen.

In my own ministry, we have expanded an employee counselling program to deal with cases of mass layoffs. We participate, obviously, with the federal government in joint labour-management adjustment committees. But perhaps most important, we as parliamentarians in this Legislature not very long ago passed legislation, amendments to the Employment Standards Act, that gives Ontario the most progressive notice regulations and most generous provisions in respect of severance, not of any jurisdiction in Canada but of any jurisdiction in North America. We have the most progressive and most generous provisions. Those provisions were implemented in this Legislature by this government.

As well, over the past three years we have put into place a transition program to offer assistance to older workers unlike any assistance offered anywhere else in Canada. The Minister of Skills Development will also be telling members about Ontario's Training Strategy and what that has done to expand collectively the skills of the people of this province.

At the same time as those things have been happening in Ontario, we have been moving step by step to ensure that we have appropriate protections and assistance for workers in this province. I invite the members of this House to look at what has happened at the federal level and look at what four years of Tory government have done to the area of spending and assistance in this area throughout Canada.

The Minister of Skills Development will be telling members about the almost \$1 billion nationwide in cutbacks in terms of assistance to working people through a variety of programs that have been systematically decimated and undercut in terms of the resources provided for them throughout the past four years under that government, which claims that it is interested through its Beaubien or de Granpré commission. It expresses an interest in helping but it speaks with its budgets. Its budgets have been decimated.

At the same time as this government was putting into place provisions to ensure that workers were appropriately compensated in terms of severance when jobs were coming to an end, the federal government systematically passed regulations in the federal cabinet to undercut our legislation and to cut unemployment insurance benefits to workers who finally

could take advantage of severance provisions which we passed.

In this government, now that the federal election is over, we will be continuing to ensure that the federal government changes its mind and changes its regulations so that the full beneficial effect of those regulations can be taken advantage of by the workers in this province.

Certainly, more needs to be done. In an environment where we will be meeting additional competitive pressures we need to look carefully at how we as a nation are going to provide appropriately for the adjustments that will be necessary. The New Democratic Party suggests that we ought not to pay attention to the historical and constitutional reality that income maintenance and employment adjustment have historically and constitutionally been the responsibility of the federal government.

That history is not only a history that looks to the past five or six years but right from the early 1930s, when the federal government, looking for a way to assist this nation out of the most severe depression it ever experienced, assumed power and acknowledged for the first time in Canadian history that it was appropriate for the working people of this country to have the benefit of a federal government that could apply the resources of a nation to worker assistance and employment programs that could be to the benefit of all Canadians. Since that time, we have had a rather good tradition in this country, a rather effective strategy.

It is the submission of this government that this strategy now needs to be re-examined with the participation not just of provincial governments but of the provincial and federal governments in this country so that we truly can prepare ourselves for some of the most difficult and challenging competitive pressures we as a nation have ever and will ever experience.

Our Premier has called for a meeting of first ministers to be held at the earliest possible date to begin the process of developing just such a national strategy on labour adjustment in Canada.

Il est très important, devant le libre-échange, que nous commençons maintenant à parler avec le gouvernement fédéral et avec les gouvernements des autres provinces pour déterminer une stratégie nationale pour tout le Canada, pour tous les travailleurs du Canada.

Bien sûr, nous avons des responsabilités ici en Ontario. Nous avons assumé ces responsabilités pendant les trois années de gouvernement libéral et nous continuerons à répondre aux besoins des



travailleurs ontariens. Mais il faut travailler avec tous les gouvernements du Canada pour vraiment se préparer à l'avenir du libre-échange au Canada.

**Mr. Mackenzie:** All of the shouting in the world by the Minister of Labour (Mr. Sorbara) is not going to make a case for what the government has not done in terms of the needs of workers in plant closures in Ontario. I want to point out that the time to stop the tragedy that we now face was before the free trade deal was signed. Yes, there is some validity to the arguments that we did not do the job or take the lead we should have in terms of the free trade fight in the federal election, and a lot of it was because we tried to nail the jelly that was the Peterson government to the wall on the free trade issue. It was almost impossible.

1600

In the standing committee on finance and economic affairs, I can recall our trying to get them to agree to an interest rate cut to clearly establish Ontario's jurisdiction in certain areas to allow for incentives for new industrial development, and we could not get that through the committee.

I can recall a suggestion, probably an old one now, that maybe we should challenge in court some of those areas where Ontario's jurisdiction overlapped the federal jurisdiction. Once again, we could not get it through that committee. We made a suggestion that maybe they should firmly say they would do what their federal leader was saying, tear up the agreement as far as Ontario was concerned, at least in terms of those areas that were Ontario's responsibility. They were not going to hear of that. It was obvious that half the members had a lingering respect for free trade anyhow and we were getting the argument, "It's this deal we don't like, not the principle of free trade." Some of them were all for that. Indeed, I have heard members in this House say that, and when you looked at the likes of Mr. Bourassa and Mr. McKenna and Mr. Decore in Alberta running around, you really had to question the legitimacy of the position.

I might say we did achieve one small point. We managed to get a resolution through, because they got fouled up in their own recommendations, which says we should give preferential hydro treatment to northern Ontario, but we have not got very far since in trying to get the government to give some muscle to that particular suggestion. I suspect we will not see it pushed by the Liberal government in this House.

We have not got action on the issue of bankruptcy and what happens to workers' wages and getting their wages out of it. There is a plant in my riding which I have used many times as an example, and it is a rather sad one. I am talking about Consolidated-Bathurst, or Connie Bath, as it is known in Hamilton, where to this day a good number of the workers from that plant are not working. The figures are skewed, because we are told that only 25 per cent of them are still unemployed. It is not true. The vast majority of them, because they were pretty old when the plant shut down, have reached retirement age and they have just been pulled off the list. They never did get a job and they never did improve the pensions they would have been entitled to in that plant.

I can also tell members that there were a number of big articles in the Hamilton press just in the last couple of days which pointed out that their union went to bat and in a difficult court case found out those workers should have been paid another maybe \$250,000 or \$300,000. I forget the amount; it was \$2,000 or \$3,000 or better a worker. The company has fought that ever since, and here, four and a half years later, the workers still do not have that money and are nowhere nearer to getting it. Those workers who have been out of work that length of time lost in terms of their wages, their improved pensions and all it has meant to them in terms of lost jobs.

We have workers, whether it is at Firestone Canada, more recently, or Goodyear Canada here in Toronto, the Connie Bath plant, the Allen Industries Canada plant, the Inglis plant, the Arrow shirt plant—and the list could go on and on back a year or two ago; not some of the new ones we have had more recently—where not all of the workers are working as yet and where most of them have suffered as a result of the plant closures. The communities have suffered and the workers have suffered. The workers have suffered twofold: not only the loss of jobs, but also as a result of a drastically reduced retirement income or pension arrangement when they are ready to retire. Their golden years have been wrecked as well as their older years when they should be expecting to make some progress.

We have not seen protection for those workers. Plant protection legislation earlier, or funding bridging to allow people to retire earlier, justification legislation, things we may have fought for a long time, many of them, some in watered down form, are in the recommendations made by the standing committee on resources development Report on Plant Closures and



Community and Employee Adjustment. I could go through about 10 or 12 of these important recommendations. We have not seen action on one of them in that report. I do not know what the government has really done to protect the workers in Ontario.

We are facing a lot more of a problem still. I recall well the testimony of one of the trucking company executives before our committee that he himself, going around Ontario, had been told by something like 500 branch plants that there was really no justification for their plant staying open with the advent of this free trade agreement.

I suspect that what has happened in the last few days is the beginning of a disturbing problem. Sure, there have been plant closures before this, for a long time. We have had a rationalization going on in industry for some time. In that rationalization, it is always the workers or their communities who lose; it is never the businesses themselves. They usually end up a little healthier, leaner and meaner, and they do not pay the costs of it.

We cannot seem to get through to this government that one of the things we have to do is say, "Hey, if you don't want punitive legislation against companies, we also don't want that punitive legislation against workers." They have to have some protection in these situations. They are not getting it. We say we have better legislation that exists elsewhere; it is not that good. We have a long way to go right across this continent, never mind this country.

The minister's vehement suggestions that we are doing better than anyone else do not answer any of those workers. I thought the debate that has just gone on in the last day was significant, the debate down at the Ontario Federation of Labour convention with some of the points that were being made by the delegates and the resolution that passed yesterday calling for plant closure legislation. How long have we been asking for it? I ask the minister where we have been progressing. Not very far in this House.

Improvements in early retirement and severance benefits: where are we on those? We have asked for some bridging or some arrangement to allow people to retire early. That will open up jobs. Where are we getting on it? We are getting nowhere in this Legislature. This government is the stumbling block in that area.

Where are we getting on expansion of public sector employment? There, probably, the government is now looking to go back to the old Tory route: "How many public sector employees can we cut out and what work we can contract out or

privatize?" We are not seeing growth in that which has traditionally been a field that provides jobs for people who are seeing their plants closed.

We are not seeing termination notice being improved. I do not know whether that is in the minister's plans or not, but I get suspicious of his plans that go back over a year now for the kind of legislation, whether it is safety and health or plant closure, that was promised. The Premier's signature, as I said earlier, was on it in that accord he signed in 1985. We have not seen a darned thing done about it.

Members will forgive us for wondering where the honesty and integrity are and what the commitment was or what that word, even with the signature of the Premier and the province of Ontario, was worth.

Where are we on pension credits? Where are we on benefits and severance pay when a company becomes insolvent? That gets back to the bankruptcy situation we have talked about. Let me tell members, the Massey Ferguson workers have learned the hard way in the benefits they have lost in that plant, in the coverage they thought they had under the contract—the health coverage, the pension coverage and the hospitalization and semiprivate room coverage, all of which they find down the drain with that particular closure.

We do not have the kind of legislation needed that we have asked for, that has been part of not only a demand from this New Democratic Party but part of committee reports the government's own members have signed. I do not think the signature of the government's members on a report and the series of recommendations mean a damn any more. I am sorry, but that is what I am beginning to feel in this particular House.

I think this minister can get up and do all the shouting he wants, but he is going to have a really difficult time in front of the workers involved. I hope he is down at the OFL and answers to it, because let me tell members, it is asking these questions and is dead serious about them.

**Mr. Cureatz:** It gives me a great deal of pleasure to have the opportunity to participate in this debate. Upon the occasion now that we are the third party, I find myself once again agreeing with my colleagues to the right of me, the members of the official opposition, as begrudging as it is for me to say that.

The interesting thing is, I have to say I support the resolution. Just to refresh everyone's memory and for the moms and dads who are home listening to the replay tonight, I say to the



honourable government House leader—I know the people in downtown Kendal would be more than appreciative to me to refresh their memories—the resolution refers to “the refusal of the Liberal government to honour its responsibility for and its commitments to working people in the area of job protection and labour adjustment.” It just says it all in a nice little nutshell.

For those lawyers who are in attendance and for those who are listening at home, that would be like the headnote of a particular case. It says it all. There might be a judge or two listening; who knows?

In any event, the point is—and I say congratulations to the opposition party in bringing this forth—it is embarrassing the Liberal administration. I say to all those backbenchers who are here listening with great glee that they can just be nicely sleeping away this afternoon, but they are going to be hearing from their constituents back in the riding where the action really counts.

It is not here. We know there is no action here because it is the four horsemen of the apocalypse who run everything. If I have said it once, I have said it, I do not know how many times—twice, maybe—the Premier, the Attorney General (Mr. Scott), the Treasurer (Mr. R. F. Nixon) and the House leader run everything here and the rest of them are insignificant, except maybe for the Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet (Mr. Elston) and the Minister of Skills Development. He is so far down the pyramid I would not even want to start looking. As for the rest of them, they are in trouble.

1610

This resolution brings it home, because indeed there are going to be one or two closings in his riding, I say to the member for Mississauga West, which I have some working—

**Mr. Neumann:** Now you tell us.

**Mr. Cureatz:** And the former mayor of Brantford over there not only cannot decide what party to belong to, but he cannot even decide which side of the House to sit on. He used to be over here; now he is over there. He used to belong to that group; now he belongs to the Liberals. I say to him that we should be looking in terms of what his government did for Massey Ferguson, or Varity, as they changed the name to down there.

The important aspect is that this resolution embarrasses the government, because it is not doing a thing so far. I tune into the radio in the morning—

**Mr. Mahoney:** The Tory government.

**Mr. Cureatz:** I say to the member for Mississauga West and to you, Mr. Speaker, to have a nice little dialogue in the six lowly minutes we have, that I am not so happy about the federal administration. I do not think they have made it clear about the responsibilities or direction they are going to take. Maybe they have; I certainly do not have a working familiarity with it.

I am going to be approaching my newly elected federal member, Ross Stevenson, who of course used to be a colleague of mine here for two terms. Happily enough, he returned to the federal House and probably made a much wiser decision running federally. There he is in the lofty powers of government once again, while we are here wilting away in third place. We will not be wilting away for too much longer. We will have to wait patiently for three more years, because it is these kinds of resolutions that strike a common chord.

I remember the days of minority government; lots of days. Back in 1977 was the first minority I was involved in, and then back in 1985. There was a lot of action in this place, a lot of discussion, a lot of thinking in terms of the concerns of the people of Ontario.

Now, what do I see? I see a large, working, complacent majority government, something I have had the opportunity of partaking in a past incarnation. The Premier and the front four are sitting back waiting for events to unfold instead of taking the aggressive approach and saying: “What can we do? The Prime Minister won another majority government.”

I am even surprised and a little shocked. It is not the Premier’s method to run away and wash his hands. In the old days under minority government, he was taking the bull by the horns. He was aggressive, the new young yuppie, and he was projecting an image across Ontario that resounded of a firm, decision-making person who was going to lead us on to better days. What do we get now? We get turning tail, hiding in the corner, condemning the federal government.

As I already said, there might be a few little areas to give a whack at, but what about the people in the province? Is that the way to have co-operation in Ontario and across Canada? The people have spoken. I saw John Turner, the leader of the Liberal Party, once again, late, at 3:30 Ontario time—I will rephrase that; Kendal time—and he said, “The people are never wrong.”

Surely this Liberal administration can face up to that and realize the people across Canada have spoken. It is time for some co-operation. It is not time for the kind of confrontation we saw in the



Trudeau years. It is time for the Premier of Ontario to sit down with the executive council and say: "Ladies and gentlemen, it's too bad the Tories have been elected with a majority government in the federal House, but let's get our act together and see if we can have a little co-operation. After all, we still have three years to run."

Are we not elected here for the concerns of the people of Ontario? Should we not be approaching the Minister of Labour and saying, "Let's take a look at some of the programs"? Let's take a look, through the Ministry of Skills Development, and see what kinds of options we have available that can be put in place to work, I shudder to say, with Brian Mulroney. Do we not have that responsibility, as elected representatives serving the people across Ontario, to ensure that we are doing the best we can for them and setting aside, I say to the member for Sudbury (Mr. Campbell), our political partisan differences and saying—

**Mr. Campbell:** Absolutely, but it takes two to tangle.

**Mr. Cureatz:** It takes two to tangle. I do not know why I am bothering with the member for Sudbury. He is so insignificant, so far away from where the action is that I am even surprised he has the gall to speak up in these chambers.

Let me say at least to those over there close to the aura of power that there should be a spillover effect, a ripple effect, that they should be taking their jobs responsibly instead of having this negative approach. They tune in on the radio because, let's face it, they do not hear about it in caucus. The Premier does not wander in and say, "Friends, this is what I am going to do next." No way. They get up in the morning and tune in to CBC radio at 7:30 and find out what the government is doing. And the government is not doing a heck of a lot at the moment.

They seem to be yelling and screaming an awful lot at the federal government, and partially, I again admit—this is the third time—maybe there is a little bit of blame to be put there. Certainly, the member for Hamilton East, who spoke before me chastised the federal government. But by the same token, what about the members opposite? We saw and now see another typical passing of the buck.

Do we want to review the pass-the-buck approach of the large Liberal administration here in Ontario? Sunday shopping: Who has heard of that? I can hardly wait, Mr. Speaker, until it comes back into these chambers. You will be hearing from me about Sunday shopping and passing the dollar to the municipalities. What

about the next round of passing the dollar, like passing the dollar and taking some responsibility on proper labour legislation, and more particularly skills development for those who are possibly going to be displaced in terms of the free trade agreement when it is finally passed?

Where else have we seen them pass the dollar? One of the crucial areas, certainly in the Golden Horseshoe in Ontario, is housing. What have we heard from the great rising star who had all the fanfare when she was elected and put in cabinet? What have we heard from the Minister of Housing (Ms. Hošek)? Another pass-the-dollar episode: "Give it to the municipalities. It is going to be their problem. We are not going to worry about it. Let the municipalities worry about housing and the placement of people in their jurisdictions."

Lo and behold, there is a third one, a third passing of the dollar. Let's bash the federal government again. The member for York Mills (Mr. J. B. Nixon) was up three or four weeks ago. I had to speak to his resolution. As a matter of fact, it was so insignificant I cannot even remember, other than the fact it was typical fed-bashing. It was housing, come to think of it. It was fed-bashing on housing. Now the government has abrogated its responsibility to work with the federal government, to put some of its own programs in. Why does it not start thinking about doing that?

**Hon. Mr. Curling:** I rise at this moment, after hearing all that noise; I was trying to decipher some sense from it all. The wonderful member from Oshawa who just spoke I suppose made some sort of sense. I think what he was saying was that there was a great neglect in this province in the past in addressing the human resources factor. I would say it is true that I appreciate his comment from that point of view.

My colleague the Minister of Labour spoke so eloquently and so factually about the situation in the province in regard to labour market adjustment and the labour market environment as it is today. I have also heard from the members of the opposition who spoke about the needs and what is to be done, but they neglected to say what has been done, and to recognize that.

I also heard the first speaker from the third party, I think it was, who spoke about getting the Minister of Skills Development to do something that is sensible. I am extremely disappointed by that comment. Let me just go back a bit. It was this government in 1986 that put forward programs and a policy and some vision in regard to training. We set forth on a road that recognizes

our most important resource in this province, our most important resource in this country: its human resource.

1620

What do we have there? We had a resource where 24 to 26 per cent of the people in the workforce were functionally illiterate. Did that come about overnight? People, of course, have a right to be literate in this society. Therefore, how then can we have a very effective workforce with such a high rate of functional illiteracy in our workforce? What we had, too, were governments, federally and provincially, that looked at immigration as a way of bringing a trained workforce into our country, into our province. When that dried up, we looked around for our own resources and found they were not as trained as we expected them to be.

We also looked at some demographic studies that have shown that our age group of 16 to 24 is declining rapidly. In the next eight years, we will see that reduced to about 20 per cent. We have a scarcity of that resource, which should be properly developed, and we should put more, of course, into our training programs.

Our Premier is on record at the first ministers' conference talking about something that should be done in regard to labour adjustment and in regard to the acceleration of the federal government then and the federal government now to get into a trade agreement with the United States, because as it is said by the Prime Minister, "We are ready and we are not afraid at all about competing."

But one does compete when one has the necessary tools in order to compete. Therefore, there was a squabble, Mr. Speaker, if you recall—I am sure you do recall, as well as all the members there—a confusion over how many jobs would be displaced at the time of the trade agreement. Some spoke about 400,000 people in Canada who would be displaced because of that trade agreement. The minister of the day, the Honourable Mr. Bouchard, agreed with us in some respects. Then the Minister of Finance, the Honourable Mr. Wilson, said it is not necessary to have any kind of labour adjustment programs in place because programs are there.

That is rather appalling. The federal government had put in place the Canadian Jobs Strategy offer of \$2.2 billion in 1984, and by 1988 that had been reduced to \$1.6 billion; accepting the fact that we need training for our people in this country, in this province, and at the same time reducing that amount of money. I ask the third party, which embraces all the philosophy of its

cousins up in Ottawa, to come forward with that kind of money to train our most important resource.

Why do we emphasize that? We look at Japan, for instance, which has used singlehandedly that single resource, the human resource, to compete with the United States. A country that is smaller than two of the states in the United States is competing with the greatest country in the world because it has developed its human resources.

The clock ticks on here. I would like to make many more points. Both parties on that side say we are passing the buck to the federal government. Does the federal government not have a responsibility to pay its costs?

**Mr. R. F. Johnston:** We should spend what we have.

**Hon. Mr. Curling:** I hear, "We should spend what we have." Members saw when I stood in the House and made the statement to pick up the slack, after the reneging on their apprenticeship program when they cut it back by \$5 million.

What did this government do at that time? What did the Premier do? We came forward and would not see those people stand by and not be trained, and be deprived of what I would say are their rights. The federal government is reneging on its responsibility, a responsibility it has had since 1944. All of a sudden, it is capping its responsibility in regard to apprenticeship.

If you ask people if they want the Premier to act as the Prime Minister for this country, some would say no, but in the meantime we felt that ideas should come forward, that maybe if we forwarded some ideas to the Prime Minister, it might be helpful.

At the last first ministers' conference, the Premier put forward a proposal of a Canada training allowance in which he said there are many people who would like to be trained, but that what is impeding them is income, so to speak, to access this training. When I was in attendance at that conference, I looked for my colleague, the Honourable Lucien Bouchard. He was absent. That is the type of commitment the Prime Minister of this country has in regard to training for this province.

We also saw a reduction in regard to Ontario. When we put forward our Ontario training strategy they had \$552 million in 1984, and a reduction to about 32 per cent, bringing it to about \$300-odd million. Is that the commitment a government should make in regard to its responsibility for training? I would say it is disgraceful.



This is a federal government that did not even want to discuss the implications we know about the trade agreement that was signed. Today, there is a call for an emergency debate, a debate in which we see criticism in respect to what this government is doing. We put in place Ontario's Training Strategy in 1986, before this trade agreement was even signed. We know the implications. We are ready. Is the federal government ready?

Is the opposition on that side, whether the official opposition or the third party, ready to come with me to Ottawa in whatever respect they want, whether they want to write to their cousins or whether the official opposition would like to speak to their colleagues there, to get more money for training, to develop the most important resource in our province, our human resources?

**Mr. Morin-Strom:** This certainly is an issue that deserves the serious attention of this government. The lack of an adjustment process for industries that are retraining has become all the more imperative with the free trade agreement apparently going through the federal Parliament. The idea of this government, and this cabinet minister, standing up here today refusing to do anything about the workers whose jobs are going to be lost, refusing to do anything about the inadequacy of pension provisions, the inadequacy of severance pay, the inadequacy of job guarantees and the continuation of benefits to workers who are going to be displaced is really a farce.

This government now has its whipping boy in terms of the federal Conservatives. We have our argument back and forth between our Conservative third party members here who blame the government for doing nothing and not taking into account what the inadequacy has been in terms of federal legislation in this area, and the current Liberal government which has its own dismal record of inactivity over the past three-and-a-half years since it first came to government in Ontario.

I certainly endorse the resolution that has been put forward by my colleague the member for Hamilton East. The refusal of the Liberal government to honour its responsibility for and its commitments to working people in the area of job protection and labour adjustment deserves our attention.

**1630**

This government now sees the start of a process of plant closures, with two closures in Ontario over the past weekend as a result of the

free trade agreement apparently going through in the next few weeks in our federal Parliament. This government has not put in place the legislative framework to protect jobs and workers throughout Ontario, a complete abdication of its commitment to the people of this province, particularly during the previous minority government.

At that time, in 1985, when this government first went into office, it made a commitment in the Agenda for Reform agreement for an item under document 3, and I will read it out. This government committed to the "reform of job security legislation, including notice and justification of layoffs and plant shutdowns and improved severance legislation." The sum total of the activity of this government on this item during the minority government was zero. Studies are not enough. What has been done, in fact, has been a total abdication of their responsibility.

In a second area in which there was a commitment, "private pension reform based on the recommendations of the Ontario select committee on pensions," the area of early retirement and indexing has again been left to the wind by this government.

A legislative framework on pension legislation was passed by this parliament just before the last provincial election, just over one year ago. However, the details of that pension reform were left to further committee study and this new government now, with its majority mandate, sitting on its fanny doing nothing for the people of the province, has not acted at all on the implementation of that legislation and has not brought forward provisions which will ensure early retirement protections, indexing of pensions and, in particular, the protection of pensions for workers who are working for firms that are shutting down.

Here we are facing a situation where workers are looking at their companies abandoning Ontario, abandoning Canada for the United States, and there is no protection that those pension plans will be continuing and that they will be able to bring those pension plans with them to another employer.

We have examples. I have had examples of workers who have worked for a couple of companies in Sault Ste. Marie. In particular, two of the local hotels, the Royal Hotel and the Windsor Park Hotel, had shutdowns in the last two years, and when those operations shut down, there was no assurance that those employees would be able to get their final pay from their

employers or that they would have their pension plans protected. Employees with as much as 30 years of service were left with no pension plan at all.

I still have a case of an employee with one of those two firms who has over 30 years of service and has not had a ruling from the Pension Commission of Ontario yet about whether he is going to have his pension protected, in what form that protection will be and when he can start collecting on that pension.

This government has had recommendations made to it. I sat on the select committee on economic affairs, a committee which looked at the ramifications of a potential free trade agreement and which made numerous reports to this Legislature. I would note that in the final report of the select committee on economic affairs, this report that came out before the end of the last minority government, recommendations were made. A number of pages were focused specifically on the adjustment process. At that time, the committee agreed:

"Adjustment to a bilateral trade agreement will be more difficult, more extensive and more costly than any adjustment we have attempted. Numerous witnesses before the committee indicated that their industry would have severe problems in adapting to a bilateral free trade environment. Some said they would suffer substantial losses in revenue, production and employment as a result. If Canada is to engage in such a disruptive undertaking in the hopes that the outcome will be a wealthier, stronger economy, then some provisions must be made for those people, industries and communities that will suffer losses. Trade adjustment assistance is expensive, but it cannot be done without."

Specifically, this committee recommended: "Governments, business, labour and other organizations should initiate programs to allow for the employment, training, geographic relocation and social needs of people affected by any trade arrangements." That was the opinion of the government members prior to this agreement going through, during the minority government when we debated and held extensive hearings on this issue. They know the kinds of adjustments which are going to be needed and the kinds of impact we are going to see in terms of worker dislocation.

The recommendation at that time was that, "Governments...should initiate programs," and that meant all governments, not just the federal government. Now we have a provincial government in Ontario which is going to abdicate its

responsibility, which is passing the buck to the federal government, saying it is solely that government's responsibility to do something about worker dislocations in a situation where, in fact, this government knows quite well that the legislative responsibility in many of these areas is under provincial jurisdiction and it has the responsibility to act in those areas.

This government has the jurisdiction for employment standards, for labour relations and pensions. We would expect that this government would stand up for the people of this province, not sit around doing nothing in terms of what impact we are going to see in the years to come from this free trade agreement.

The government has commissioned a major new group, the Premier's Council, which is touted as one of the real new initiatives, supposedly, in the high tech era of Ontario. What are the recommendations to come out of the Premier's Council? In their first major report, the third of their major recommendations is on the whole area of a review of worker adjustment. That recommendation states, "The Premier's Council should examine the labour adjustment issues of restructuring in Ontario's core industries and work with the government to develop a comprehensive approach to meeting the adjustment needs of workers in these industries."

Now we have a government which has been given a scapegoat by the federal Tories in terms of the free trade agreement. The provincial Liberals found it very convenient to oppose the free trade agreement in the last election campaign, and now that the Premier is unable and unwilling to live up to his commitment to stop an agreement which is going to do damage to Ontario, this government is laying all the blame on the federal Conservatives and refusing to even act on the recommendations of its own Premier's Council in terms of the needs for worker adjustment.

Surely it is time this government recognized that it has a responsibility and a role to play in protecting the jobs and the future of our workforce. Other countries in the western world have been able to do it. The Premier's Council study gives examples and looks at what other governments, in western Europe in particular, have done in terms of protecting workers and easing the process of adjustment to new economy. This government has to do the same and I call upon it to do so.

**Mr. Runciman:** I am pleased to have the opportunity to participate in this important debate. I know we share the concerns of the



official opposition with respect to the inaction on the part of the government. Obviously, we do not share their views with respect to the long-term impact of the free trade agreement on Ontario. We think, as do our federal cousins, that Ontario will be a net beneficiary in terms of the creation of new jobs.

There has been no dispute with respect to the fact that there are indeed going to be some losers in the province. That has been recognized by all participants in this debate about the wisdom of entering into a free trade agreement with the United States. To some extent we are getting into uncharted waters in terms of which industries might be impacted and how significant that impact might be.

There has been some concern about textiles and furniture, and some of the food product industries as well. I heard a newscast recently on the Campbell Soup Co. and the fact that a lot of the products it uses in the manufacture of soup are available through supply management systems. Of course, that has an impact on the price of their raw materials and ultimately on the price of their end product. Indeed, companies such as Campbell and others may have to look at other efficiencies that they are going to have to achieve in order to remain productive in a continental environment.

1640

I think the main thrust of this debate today is really to draw attention to the government's lack of desire to deal with some of the very real problems that are going to be coming to the fore in the next months and years. As the previous speaker mentioned, the Premier's Council report dealing with this issue, and I am going to quote another section of that in respect to labour adjustment, says:

"The province must be prepared to address the problems of labour adjustment in restructuring industries. If Ontario intends to assist only viable firms which fall into difficulty, it must be prepared to help the workers of nonviable firms to develop new skills and find alternative employment." I repeat, "The province"—the government of Ontario—"must be prepared."

There is no indication being given, at this stage in any event, that the Premier or the government of Ontario is prepared to take those very urgently required steps. The Premier is sloughing off responsibility; his ministers are sloughing off responsibility. He himself is acting like a sore loser in respect to the results of the federal election, like a spoiled kid.

We are used to that sort of reaction from the first minister of this province in respect to a number of issues over the years, but this is an area where I think he should be stepping back and reassessing the position he and his government are taking in respect to dealing with this critical situation.

The Minister of Skills Development spoke earlier, and naturally took the line of condemning the federal government. We are used to that. That is an old tired refrain, but it keeps coming forward. We have to take a look at what this minister has done in his role over the past 14 months as the man responsible for the Ministry of Skills Development. I will tell you, Mr. Speaker, it is sadly lacking; sadly lacking indeed. He can get up there and ramble on, but when you analyse the rhetoric and put it under some not terribly close scrutiny, you come to the very clear fact that the ministry simply is not doing the job.

My colleague the member for London North earlier today raised a question in the House regarding the Transitions program. The fact of the matter is that last year there was \$14 million set aside for the Transitions program, and what did this government spend on that program? Approximately \$284,000. This year, they have reduced it from \$14 million to \$8 million, and what have they spent to date? Only \$715,000. Now the minister has the unmitigated gall to get up in the House today and blame it all on the feds, who are not doing anything and not spending enough money.

Let's look at what is happening on the federal side of things. They are not cutting apprenticeship funds. In 1986, they had \$25 million budgeted; in 1987, \$35 million budgeted; in 1988, \$37 million budgeted. Contrast that with what is happening with this particular minister and this particular government. They are not very efficient, and when they do have the dollars, they simply cannot deliver the programs.

I think that there is a very serious question here in terms of the credibility of the minister and how he is able to cope with the very serious problems facing this province in respect to retraining. I want to quote from a speech that the minister made to the Conference Board of Canada on October 21, he may recall.

**Hon. Mr. Curling:** Great speech.

**Mr. Runciman:** Yes, great speech, great rhetoric; no action to back it up.

"Apprenticeship must continue to gain support from industry, labour and educational institutions to meet critical skills shortages....And we are expanding apprenticeship opportunities."

Let's take a look at how they are expanding apprenticeship opportunities. I will raise the issue that was raised by his colleague the member for Oxford (Mr. Tatham) just recently when he asked about the government regulations dealing with apprenticeship training programs. I have that material here somewhere; it is just a matter of finding it in this mess on my desk.

In any respect, the member got the usual kind of gobbledegook response from the minister when they were talking about the ratios of having a journeyman with an apprentice and the requirements under the act and the regulations, and the fact that this is placing severe restraints on the ability of employers across this province to attract apprentices into a variety of skilled trades.

The minister got up and gave the usual kind of answer, that this is the sort of thing we are looking at. His colleague the member for Oxford got up and said, "Well, that's okay, but what are you going to do specifically?" Even his own colleague is frustrated with the lack of action, lack of activity, lack of any real initiatives on the part of his own government and his own minister.

Obviously, this is a major problem and the minister simply is not prepared to deal with it or does not swing enough weight in the executive council if he cannot get these rather simple, I would think, changes through. We are talking, I assume, about a regulatory change in respect to the number of apprentices who can work with skilled tradesmen.

We have letters in respect to one particular situation with Abram Sheet Metal Inc. in Sarnia. The minister should be aware of this; he responded to the leader of my party in respect to this particular case. But this has been going on for some months. I wrote to the minister myself many months ago in respect to a situation in my riding dealing with apprentices working for an electrical contracting firm.

**An hon. member:** And you never got an answer.

**Mr. Runciman:** Oh, we got an answer. But we got the same sort of answer that the member for Oxford got, that is, "We are taking a look at this situation."

The firm of Abram Sheet Metal was in jeopardy, in terms of whether or not it was going to be able to carry on its operations under these very severe restrictions placed upon it by provincial legislation and provincial regulation. That urgent letter was brought to the minister's attention in September and as late as a couple of weeks ago, if you take a look at his response in the House to the question from the member for

Oxford, which was only about one week ago I think, he is still saying essentially the same thing.

There is simply no activity, no action and no real commitment on the part of this minister to get the job done or to deal with the very real problems that exist out there in terms of the people who are going to be facing readjustment in their lives, significant dislocation.

They are quite prepared to get up and express their concern for virtually everything. I say that people who express concern for everything are really concerned about nothing. That is the kind of attitude and approach we get from this government on a continuing basis, and it has to change.

**Mr. Ferraro:** It is my pleasure indeed to participate in this emergency debate brought on by the New Democratic member for Hamilton East. It is quite coincidental, I am sure, that this motion comes forward at the same time that the Ontario Federation of Labour is having its annual convention here in Toronto.

Nevertheless, it does give me the opportunity to indicate to the House my position, the position of the minister and of the Ministry of Financial Institutions vis-à-vis the pension issue and what this government is doing and what the government is not doing, as far as the opposition is concerned.

The opposition would stand up and say that there is a serious problem with pensions and that it has existed for a number of years. One can argue that yes, their concerns are to some degree relevant. But they would not say—I did not hear the Leader of the Opposition stand up and say that in regard to withdrawals of surpluses in pensions, there is a moratorium on pension withdrawals and that moratorium still exists.

I want to alleviate the concerns of some of the people in Ontario, particularly those who are in pension funds. I point out that 40 per cent of the Ontario labour force is involved to some degree in pension funds. Nor was it heard from the member for Nipissing, a member of the third party, when he so vividly indicated his resentment and reaction to the inactivity, from his perception, of the Ontario Liberal government vis-à-vis pension reform.

**1650**

One of the biggest problems has to do with the fact that inflation protection in pensions is of concern and the fact that the member's party, his government, fully indexed public service pensions in 1975, but more seriously as a consequence, did not fund it. It is a billion-dollar



problem that we have to deal with and will deal with.

So it is very easy to make promises, but when they do not follow up those promises with concrete economic or fiscal responsibility, as they should have in 1975, it is left to perhaps a more courageous government to pick up the slack.

They mention pensions in the motion, and the impression could be given that indeed this government has done nothing vis-à-vis pensions. I want to point out that this in itself is a gross injustice. Most members of this House surely know that the Pension Benefits Act, 1987, was passed almost unanimously, if not unanimously—and I stand to be corrected—by all three parties in this House. The Pension Benefits Act, 1987, came into effect in January 1988.

I want to point out some of the substantive changes that have been implemented as a result of the leadership of the Premier of this province and my government, with the support of the opposition parties, and also to point out what we are doing at present, now that that particular act has been implemented.

What did the new act say about pensions, and force employers to deal with as a result of the passage of that act and the implementation of the recommendations in January of this year?

For the first time, full-time employees are eligible to join a pension plan sponsored by their employer after two years of service, regardless of their age. Previously, the eligibility standards were left to the discretion of employers.

Part-time employees are also eligible for the first time to become plan members after two years if they have worked at least 700 hours each year or earned at least 35 per cent of the year's maximum pensionable earnings each year for two consecutive years. Previously, part-time employees were entitled to join an employer-sponsored plan at the discretion of the employer.

Benefits earned by a plan member become vested and locked in after two years of plan membership. Formerly, plan members were entitled to vesting after they had reached the age of 45 and accumulated 10 years of service.

Plan members now have the right, on termination of employment, to transfer vested pension benefits to other retirement savings vehicles. Formerly, few portability options were available to employees.

Discrimination on the basis of sex with regard to pension benefits and rights is prohibited. Previously, different pension benefit levels could

be offered to men and women of the same age with the same length of service.

Employers are now required to fund at least 50 per cent of the value of a member's pension benefits. Formerly, no minimum level of funding was required.

It goes on and on.

Let me point out another thing. Employers must credit employee contributions with a reasonable rate of interest. Previously, the rate of interest with which employee contributions were credited was left to the discretion of the plan sponsor.

Plan members now have the option of taking early retirement within 10 years of the normal retirement date under the plan. Previously, this option was provided only at the discretion of the employer. We changed that.

Survivor benefits must be made available to plan members and their families. That is a new requirement.

Plan members and their families are entitled to regular access to information respecting their benefits and obligations under the plan. That is a new requirement.

Plan members have the option of establishing an advisory committee to monitor the administration of the plan. That is a new option.

So we have made substantive inroads into the pension problem in Ontario, and indeed we are making new inroads.

What are some of the concerns that the minister and the government are worried about now? Investment regulation is one. Aspects of the pension benefits guarantee fund is another serious problem we have to deal with; aspects of solvency evaluation, which I am sure every member of this House is aware of and concerned about; the interaction of the Pension Benefits Act and the Family Law Act, which most lawyers will say is a serious problem; and finally, definitions and accuracy of the language. In today's rhetorical interaction between various groups of people, it is always difficult to impress upon the average Canadian, the average worker, in simple forms the ramifications of any proposed legislation.

Let me be a little more specific. The pension benefits guarantee fund may require restructuring to determine more accurately the extent of the potential liabilities and to balance these against the assets. Experience has demonstrated the need for clarification of the act and regulations. Our goal is to preserve the fund's financial viability while maintaining protection for employees' benefits.

I recently, as of yesterday, had the pleasure of meeting and being briefed by Robert Hawkes, who is the superintendent of the Pension Commission of Ontario. Indeed, we are actively, as a ministry and as a government, dealing with that issue in particular, among others.

What else are we doing? In the area of investment regulations, for example, we are examining the requirement to file a statement of investment principles and guidelines as well as clarification of investment categories.

As we have dealt with, although there is a moratorium on withdrawals of surpluses, the solvency valuation issue is one that we are actively considering in order to provide an early warning, of course, of potential funding problems in a plan windup situation. Members should bear in mind that, as I said earlier, the moratorium is in effect on surplus withdrawals.

It goes on, but probably, aside from the fact that the concern is being expressed about who can get involved in pensions—and indeed, I pointed out earlier that only 40 per cent of employers in Ontario are involved—we are, as a government, trying actively and continuously to come up with a plan, a program whereby, in the end, we can include, we hope, all workers in Ontario.

Aside from involvement and participation in pension plans, probably one of the most talked about and written about problems is the problem of indexing of pensions. This indeed is a major policy issue for all members elected to this honourable House. Ontario could be the very first jurisdiction in North America to implement indexing. There is no other jurisdiction that we are aware of that we can use as a model, so we indeed are inventing the wheel in this regard and we take great pride in showing leadership in this particular area.

In order to ensure a thorough analysis and, indeed, in order to assist us in making sure the best possible approach is taken, the government appointed the Friedland Task Force on Inflation Protection for Employment Pension Plans to advise us on how best to address the inflation protection issue. In January 1988, the Friedland task force presented a four-volume report with 28 specific recommendations. The Friedland recommendations gave us a basis on which to start a consultation process with business and with labour.

Indeed, in conclusion, I would say it is the intent of this government to continue to lead the way as far as pension reform is concerned, and to do so in a consultative manner, including all

members of pension plans, the private sector, employers and employees.

**Mr. R. F. Johnston:** I would like to join in this exercise, which is quite symbolic, perhaps only symbolic, in the sense that we all get a chance to talk and nothing will come of our ventures today. It is basically what the Liberal government has been up to for the last number of years, giving itself a lot of public relations around what it will do for workers who are dispensed—displaced—and not taking any action at all.

As members know, today I am suffering from a physical impediment, not having the normal weight on my upper lip that allows me to speak in some sort of coherent fashion, so if I trip over my words, I know they will forgive me. It is the first weight-loss program that I have ever been successful on, however. I just want to leave that with members.

How things have changed. During the campaign in 1987, this government talked about stopping free trade. It talked about not allowing this to go through, that it had a veto. It actually fooled the people of Ontario into believing that this government really had a veto that it was willing to exercise.

**1700**

David, the lion that roared, has now had his dentures removed by the federal election and has decided that he has no teeth, no powers and is unwilling to act on anything. He brings in strange little bills in a symbolic fashion to license the sale of water, to license the introduction of for-profit medicine or the increase of for-profit medicine in Ontario at a time when he can actually do something substantive and something that was promised years ago by this Liberal government to protect workers who are going to be fundamentally displaced by this wrongheaded deal that we are entering into.

He has chosen not to take any action. Instead, the ministers get up today apologizing for what they have not done, trying to embroider it as if it is somehow something workers can hold on to. We have moved, as the members will know, from having ministers of labour who merely wrung their hands and were terribly concerned and always had a furrowed brow whenever they rose in the House, to now having a Marie Antoinette of labour ministers who basically say, "That is it; that is fine. Let them eat cake. This is the Liberal cake that they will be able to digest as they lose their jobs," and leave it up to the federal government, that wonderful, progressive federal government, to look after these workers.



Then we have the diplodocian analysis of the Minister of Skills Development, who basically tells us that it is the feds who have somehow messed up all our programs for workers in the province. I tell members that is ludicrous. The Transitions program, which I am surprised the minister did not want to expound on today, which is there to help older workers who have been displaced—a major initiative by this Liberal government, a progressive initiative—was budgeted for \$14 million two years ago.

How much did his government manage to spend on all those workers who had been displaced? It spent \$280,000. Reluctantly, I am sure, he then reduced the budget to only \$8 million for this year. It is probably a wise move when he has not managed to find money that can be useful to displaced older workers in this province up to this point. How much has he spent? He has more than tripled the amount this year. Of the \$8 million budgeted, he spent \$715,000 to protect older workers who have been displaced.

He can attack the federal government all he wants for what it has not done on apprenticeship. The \$5 million that he says he is going to spend there—I trust that in this one area of his ministry he was actually going to do it, but he has never spent the money in terms of young people who are unemployed and Futures. He has not spent it on Transitions. Why should I or anybody in this House believe that this government is actually going to protect workers who are being dislocated in Ontario because of the impending increase in plant shutdowns that we are going to see?

I have, I guess, almost seniority within this room now, except for the member directly across from me, who has been here more years than anybody would care to count, including himself, I am sure. I remember a select committee of this Legislature that was designed to deal with plant shutdowns. I remember working on that right up to the 1981 election. Unfortunately, the then Premier, Mr. Davis, brought in that election before that report could find itself into this House, but we had a unanimous vote of that committee by all three parties.

There are members on the other side now, the government side today, who are ministers in this House today, who were on that committee, which passed motions that, unfortunately, never made it back to this House because of the call of an election by Mr. Davis, motions that called for the protection of workers who were laid off. It called for the protection and notification of workers when there was going to be a shutdown.

Yet we have this government today, which has not moved on these fundamental issues even though it was supposedly in favour while in opposition, as was the Tory government prior to that time. It never moved on it, either.

I remember bringing before that committee the workers from SKF in my riding. They were just the first of a large number of workers who were laid off during that last recession, when the multinational branch plants that form the base, unfortunately, of the economic industrial heartland of Ontario, closed. SKF and Canadian General Electric closed. We had a major battery plant close. We had thousands of workers in my riding alone who were displaced during that last recession.

I remember the SKF workers coming in and explaining how their company had systematically prepared itself for getting rid of the plant here in Ontario and producing the ball-bearings that we had been producing for 26 years in Scarborough, now in Philadelphia; how it had shipped out of the country all the lines it had made a profit on and kept only the unprofitable lines in this country in order to justify its closing.

I remember as well those workers saying that one of the great ironies was that the union in Sweden, the home country of SKF, was notified of the potential closing of the Scarborough plant before management in Scarborough ever learned about it. I remember all the members of that committee being shocked by that revelation and all indicating that the workers and government needed to be informed about decisions that might be made to close down a plant in Ontario so that workers could be properly protected and, if they needed to be displaced, that the proper infrastructure could be put in there to help those workers.

I say to the Minister for Skills Development that the average age of those workers was 49 at that time. Most of them were plant-skilled people with very low education, the kind of people who have followed in their thousands since, who all could benefit from a program like Transitions. Yet his government has failed to produce a program that has been meaningful for them actually to participate in. That has been a major, fundamental failure by this government.

I hate to remind this government of its obligations back in the heady days when it first took power in 1985, but it signed a document agreeing to undertake a number of legislative actions, and to one degree or another, on most of those actions it moved. I can quibble with what it did on rent review and a few other things, but there are a couple of major areas it did not move

on. One of them was not to address this fundamental section, which is included in the member for Hamilton East's motion, that it would, "reform job security legislation, including notice and justification of layoffs and plant shutdowns."

That was the government's promise in 1985 as part of the written accord. Here we are at the end of 1988, and what is it saying in this House? It is saying that it is going to bring it in imminently, that it is going to bring it in before this deal goes through in January as a major statement of our responsibility to look after our workers, as a major statement of provincial rights and obligations to do so? No. This Liberal government is saying, "That's up to Mr. Mulroney, and if he moves on that kind of program, then of course we'd be willing to participate, but we are not going to show leadership here."

So much for the change in Liberal attitudes which has taken place over the last number of years since that 1981 select committee, since its reaffirmation in 1985 of a commitment to the workers of Ontario. Today it is no different, I would say, from past Conservative governments in terms of its attitudes to protecting workers at a time when they are going to be most crucially in need. Of this I have great regret.

**Mrs. Cunningham:** I find it a little ironic to be standing here today discussing what should be done about the people in Ontario who will be displaced by free trade when very little that is constructive has been done right now for people who are seeking training.

I would like to make my position very clear. As we moved about in some of our schools in London and in the counties surrounding us in the last couple of weeks, we found young people are very concerned about this debate. I think the message we should be giving young people is that free trade will bring many opportunities to this province, a province that is already boasting of a wonderful economy, a tremendous opportunity. People are working and we are contributing and we should all be very proud of that.

What we are very much concerned about is that we know people may have difficulties for many reasons, free trade perhaps being one of them. In looking at the reports over the last few months as we all entered the free trade debate, we were very much pleased that different independent businesses, the trades, certainly the colleges and universities and people such as the Canadian Federation of Independent Business were smart enough and interested enough to let us know what the trends are. We saw positive trends and

we saw negative trends. What this province should be doing right now is preparing for them.

**1710**

I had the privilege of being in England not too long ago and as I looked at the news media over there, both from the United Kingdom and from Europe, what I saw were the plans for 1992, the plans for employment, for tourism, for enticing people to visit their countries, for keeping their workforce employable and employed, their plans for skills. We ourselves in this province as recently as last September were talking about the changing needs of the workforce and what we have to do.

As I advised a group yesterday, for us to get caught up in the negative part of free trade and use it as an excuse for getting nothing done or getting very little done or for not responding to the needs out there now is a real copout for this government or for any members of the opposition who may support such a stand.

What we need to do now is plan for the next decade. We should be having programs that will help people to become employed, whether they are changing their trades, their skills, their businesses or their professions, which we know is happening now.

I suppose my greatest disappointment is that we are not doing a very good job of the programs we have now. I spoke in the House today about a training program for older workers. I heard my colleague the member for Scarborough West (Mr. R. F. Johnston) talk about it just a short while ago. What we really need to do with that program is to change it.

Yes, it is our responsibility, if we have some 38,000 workers in this province today who are not employed, who are out of work, to help them become employed. Yes, we should be reaching out and we should be not only advertising programs in newspapers and throughout the workforce, we should be seeking companies, businesses, technology, anything we can to find out where the real need is for these workers. We know there are tremendous gaps out there in the workforce and these people could be working.

What do we do? We put aside a budget of \$14 million. That was this Liberal government's election promise. It was its program. I am very suspicious when I see that \$14 million being slashed to \$8 million after just one year. It means a couple of things: either there is not a need for the program or the program is not effective; it is not working. We all know there is a need for that particular program, and that is the age group that



we should be concerned about in the very near future.

I would urge the government members who are here now to go after the Minister of Skills Development to speak to the Premier and make certain that the money the government has right now for these programs is spent and utilized to retrain people. They should be working now.

I guess my great concern is that if the program is not working now, if we cannot get people into it and the government is not doing anything about it, whatever will it do if in fact this tremendous concern materializes and we have whole workforces that have to be retrained?

I think we should be working on that now and I am not talking about a study; I am not talking about a paper to be released a month from now or even two months from now. We know now what we have to do.

There is another area that we should be very much concerned about and that is the apprenticeship program. We have stood in this House and asked questions about it for the last six months, the reason being that it is a program that is being utilized. But we are not certain, yet, how effective it is because what we need to do is measure it and ask how many of the 3,000 apprentices who are now enrolled in community colleges across this province, first, complete the course and, second, are gainfully employed. We have not asked those questions and we need to do that.

Because that is a program that appears to be utilized, this Liberal government says, "Even though there is a waiting list, we will not let anyone else into it, because the federal government is not giving us enough money."

That is not the case, and it is too bad that the Premier of the province can get away with what I call misleading the public, because the federal government in 1986-87 put \$25 million into this program, in 1987-88 it put \$35 million into this program and in 1988-89 it gave us \$37 million. They have been increasing their contribution to apprenticeship programs. I think it is so sad that we walk out of this Legislative Assembly thinking the opposite because of statements that are made.

What the Liberal government is saying is, "We need more money." If that is a program that is working, why not take some of the money that is not being spent wisely from one program and put it into another. Far be it from me to say that older workers are less important, but the government is not going to spend the \$8 million that it should have been able to spend on retraining before the

end of this fiscal year. Then job retraining does become a nonpriority for the Liberal government. I will be the first person out there saying something about it very shortly, in fact, I am already.

The members in this House who stood here during the election and said that this was a priority for them are going to be somewhat embarrassed. I think our priority ought to be to get the programs up, get them going and help people.

My challenge in even making this statement during this debate today is that we accept our responsibility here in Ontario, that we be part of Canada, part of the real world as the European Community has done, that we take our responsibilities seriously, that we not pass the buck. One, it is silly; two, it does not make sense, and three, it is not a positive step at all.

The young people in the schools that I have spoken in, some four in the last couple of weeks, are simply laughing at the statement of the Premier, who says, "If people are displaced because of free trade, let the feds worry about it." That is not a responsible position for the Premier or members of the Liberal government to be taking.

I urge the government to take a look at its own budgets for retraining now, do some transferring very quickly where programs are working, build it into the base for apprenticeships, if that is what it thinks is important and it knows it has waiting lists. Next year, take another look at the mature worker retraining program, Transitions, make it work, find the workplace that needs those employees, train them, make them feel good about living in Ontario, because that is an age group that is going to require our most thoughtful decisions around retraining and letting them be part of our world and our economy.

It has been a pleasure to have this opportunity to speak on such an important matter this afternoon.

**Mr. Mahoney:** It is a pleasure to rise this afternoon to speak to this issue. I want to make a couple of comments about a comment made by the member for Scarborough West, who said that no matter what we said in this Legislature today, it would have very little impact. I wonder, then, why that party is bothering to put forth a resolution under the guise of an emergency debate if it truly feels the debate has no impact on the future of this province and this country.

I would like to think things that are said by members of all three parties in this House would have some impact somewhere, if nowhere else

than in their own ridings; that at least what we are doing when we agree to an emergency debate, which this government has done today, is worthwhile and of some import to this province.

I analysed the motion that is before us under standing order 37, and tried to understand the basis of the motion and where the opposition party was coming from. I came to the conclusion that a comment made by one of the members of the Ontario Federation of Labour whom I saw on the late news last night—that in the free trade issue, “we in the NDP lost our own agenda”—is probably a very realistic statement and probably reality.

It has occurred to me that, really, the two people who brought the free trade issue forward as an issue of national importance and debate and made sure that the Conservative government debated it and that Canadians right across this country had an opportunity to debate the issue in the school gymnasiums and the church basements and the community centres across this country, were the Premier and John Turner.

1720

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** Where was Ed Broadbent?

**Mr. Mahoney:** The question is, “Where was Ed Broadbent?” I believe in his opening statement in the first round of fire that he laid out before the Canadian people in the federal election, the leader of the federal New Democratic Party did not even mention the free trade agreement as an issue of concern to his party. It is clear to me that the NDP members feel that they indeed did lose the agenda and that it was taken away from them by the Premier and carried on very strongly across this country and in the debate by John Turner.

I then tried to analyse why the Tories would climb into bed with the socialists, recognizing, of course, that politics makes strange bedfellows. I understand that, but I tried to analyse that too. Here we have a group in the third party, with its federal counterparts who fought for the free trade agreement, unabashedly so, who stood here in the face of concerns being expressed by members of the opposition and by members of this party, led by our Premier and, in fairness, led by the Leader of the Opposition, from the NDP’s point of view—

**Mr. R. F. Johnston:** Don’t be fair, Steve.

**Mr. Mahoney:** To the member for Scarborough West, I will try to be fair. Where I have an opportunity, I will try to be fair.

They stood there unabashedly and said: “Go, go, team. We are all for free trade.” Now they stand there and say: “Okay, guys, our federal party won it. We recognize that it is a mandate across this country. Now, what are you going to do to solve the problems?”—problems that we told them in the first place would come home to roost.

I want to take just a moment to suggest to the members opposite that this government and this party would not make any kind of statement like the one made, unfortunately, by the member for Mississauga South in the federal Parliament—not the member for Mississauga South (Mrs. Marland) here; I should correct that—the statements that were attributed to Mr. Blenkarn earlier. I just want to take an opportunity on behalf of the people of Mississauga, and I am sure the provincial members for Mississauga South, Mississauga North (Mr. Offer) and Mississauga East (Mr. Sola) will join me, to apologize to the citizens of Ottawa for those rather unfortunate comments. Hopefully, were a business to fail due to the FTA, or were workers to need to be retrained in the Ottawa area, I assume that the federal member, Mr. Blenkarn, was not suggesting that the federal government would ignore those people.

This government will not ignore those people, regardless of the political representation that they have in this House, and I am quite confident that we will show fairness and equity to the people all across this province.

Some of the previous speakers have asked what this government has done to deal with displaced workers and to deal with the economic wellbeing of this province. I would like to take just a moment, if I might, to talk about the Premier’s Council and its work to help the province’s economy and labour force adjust to the new economic realities that we face today.

We did not just wake up to this problem, like some other people in this Legislature, because in 1986 the Premier’s Council was indeed established to help the government develop economic strategies to meet the competitive challenges of the 21st century. In many areas of life in this province we have recognized a need to enter into new partnerships, new concepts and new thinking. The Premier’s Council brought together members of the business, labour, academic and government communities into a common forum to debate how best to ensure that our generation and future generations have access to jobs and prosperity.



The Premier established the council because he recognized that our industrial and social infrastructures are coming under unprecedented pressure. Not only must Ontario modernize its existing industrial base, which has provided much of our wealth so far, it must ensure it is well positioned in the new and emerging industries that represent the wealth of the future.

Since its inception, the Premier's Council has developed a number of significant initiatives to help the province adjust to these changes. It has developed seven centres of excellence to improve Ontario's research and development capabilities in key areas of technological opportunities such as space, new materials, telecommunications and information technology.

It has designated six centres of entrepreneurship in Ontario colleges and universities to help instil in students an awareness of the opportunities and challenges involved in running your own business.

It has developed a program to provide matching grants to industrial research projects involving promising new processes and technologies. It has developed a program to encourage universities and the private sector to collaborate in research projects. In fact, last Friday I had the opportunity to attend a forum at Ryerson Polytechnical Institute with attendees from the private sector and the university sector to discuss this very issue.

The council has also participated in a major review of the competitiveness of the Ontario economy. This was a massive project involving a great deal of research, discussion and analysis. More than 1,000 people were consulted, which led to the preparation of a report: *Competing in the New Global Economy*.

This report identified a number of major challenges facing the Ontario economy and made a series of recommendations to deal with those challenges. It recommended assistance to help our mature industries modernize. It outlined policies to help new industries grow and prosper. It recommended ways to foster a more entrepreneurial culture, perhaps contrary to the desires of some of the members opposite, and it suggested ways to improve our science and technology infrastructure.

The government has already acted on a number of these recommendations and is in the process of developing several others. It is implementing a new direction for industrial restructuring by establishing the office of the industrial restructuring commissioner, charged with assisting industries and workers to meet and

adjust to the challenges imposed by technological change.

This commissioner will assess the competitive factors facing selected industries in order to avoid, where possible, plant closures and job losses. In this capacity, he will consult with organized labour and workers, management, the local and federal governments and the communities at large.

He is already reviewing two vital Ontario industries, forest products and food processing, to see what this government, in partnership with industry, labour and other groups, might do to assist.

The government has also acted on the council's recommendation to improve assistance for research and development by introducing the R and D superallowance in the last budget. This will increase the tax write-offs for companies undertaking R and D, one of the key building blocks of competitive products and processes.

**Mr. R. F. Johnston:** Do you write your own speeches.

**Mr. Mahoney:** I do write my own speeches, but I like to get my facts straight, so the odd time I go to staff in the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Technology to ask them if they would give me the proper information, unlike some members opposite who simply like to shoot from the lip, whether or not they have hair on it; when it does not really matter to them whether their point of view is accurate.

I find that sometimes, just once in a while, it is helpful to get the accurate points of view across that come from this government, an open, accessible government which cares about the future economy of this province.

**Mr. Breagh:** I had a chance to listen to the debate this afternoon. As I watched it, I could not help but feel that we have done this before, that this House has dealt with a resolution of this nature before.

I was struck by the ironies that are here, and a word keeps coming into my mind that bothers me, because the word is "betrayal."

There is a sense, as one listens to this debate this afternoon, that people who understand what is happening, people who should know better, have, for reasons that escape me, decided they are not prepared to accept their responsibilities; they want to find another set of excuses to do nothing. And that is sad.

Members who are new to this assembly will not perhaps have seen this before, but we have been through a recessionary period when a number of people in our ridings came to us with

the very simple notion that through no fault of their own, their place of employment did not exist any more.

I recall that when we had a select committee study the matter, many members here were shocked. They had never seen people of that age group, people who were obviously folks who had done what they were supposed to do, worked very hard for a long time in one workplace and then had their life destroyed by a decision elsewhere, in Philadelphia or Miami or New York City or Sweden.

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Some members were struck here because they perhaps did not represent an industrial riding and did not know what that was like, did not have a sense of the destruction that is caused by those decisions. They will. That is coming their way.

I was struck again by the irony that I have heard some speeches from the government side this afternoon that are identical, almost word for word, with speeches given by members of the governing party at that time. They extolled the great virtues of their wonderful program and they laid blame on another level of government, and that seems to be the government's first response.

One can do that—obviously, they have done it again this afternoon—and it works to a degree, until one has to look someone in the eye who has lost his job. Then their rhetoric, their programs and their blame-laying just do not hold water any more, because, in the end, this is a very human exercise. It is about the most basic exercise that one can encounter.

People will come to us, people we know—not some strange statistic on a page, but people we know—and ask us: “Why is this happening to me? What did I do wrong?” The answer, of course, is: “You didn’t do anything wrong. This is not your fault.” The terms are being floated now, by those who get well paid to come up with this terminology, things like “dislocation,” which is a nice, sanitized word for, “You don’t have a job any more.”

I notice that in three announcements that have been made since the last general election was held, there was no reason given for delaying the announcement of the plant closure until after the election; it was coincidence. On each occasion, someone who was well dressed and able to converse well with reporters had the gall to go in front of the television cameras and say, “This is just coincidence.”

Members will know—if they do not know it now, they will shortly—that this kind of hogwash will be perpetuated over the next little while. If

there is to be a distinction made, the last set of plant shutdowns we had in this province was caused basically by an economic dislocation in the United States and it had all those ramifications back here.

When we get into that kind of a recessionary period and people have to decide whether they will keep a plant open in Alabama or New York state or Philadelphia, or close their Canadian plant, members should know that it will be the Canadian plant that closes. That is the reality that they will have to deal with.

They should know that if the free trade agreement plays out in the way that many of us think it will, it will not just be industrial workers knocking at their doors—and rest assured that they will knock at their doors. Members can tell them about every little government pamphlet that they have in their offices; they can tell them about the wonderfulness of their government; they can tell them about how wonderful the rest of the economy is. But the workers will come back to their reality, which is that they do not have a job any more.

I think one of the things that angers me to some degree this afternoon is simply that I know there are members on the government side today who understand this clearly. There are not only members who understand what should be done, but also there are members who agreed that they should take some action to see that that never happens again.

I was one of the members who negotiated the accord with the Liberals to let them form a government. I was in the room when we discussed what type of programs should be done. I can report that there was no argument about what should be done. There was no argument that pensions had to be corrected; there was no argument that plant shutdowns had to be given notification; there was no argument that we had to do major restructuring of people's economic lives and we had to learn how to retrain people. There was no argument when those items were made part of the accord that allowed the Liberals to form a government in the first instance.

I think that was because, among those who had been here for a while, we had gone through the parliamentary experiences that bring that stuff to the fore. We had had the debates, emergency debates like this afternoon; we had struck a select committee; we had discussed those ideas; we had identified what the needs were, and we put them on paper.

It is also ironic—and I cannot help but mention this too this afternoon—that during the course of



the accord and the monitoring of the accord, one of the few areas where no real action took place is in this area we are discussing this afternoon. If one wanted to measure what they did of what was in the accord, there are some areas where one could clearly identify that the government initiative was a good, thorough piece of business that got done. But if one wanted to define the areas where little was done, where at the very heart of the matter there was a betrayal of the trust that was part of that accord, it was around the matters that are in this resolution this afternoon.

Now perhaps that is simply because none of us has any funny ideas that we can reform pensions easily. We do not have the notion that it is an easy thing to do. But we do know that it must be done and it has not been done. We do not have any illusions over here that somebody who is 45 or 50 years of age and is an industrial worker is somebody who is easily retrained for another position.

We know that is not an easy task, but it has to be done and the government knows it has to be done. I do not think we would be happy but we would understand if the government of the day stood in its place and said: "We know what has to be done, but it's not easy and it's not something we can do tomorrow morning. But we will make a financial commitment to try to do it. We accept our share of the responsibility to carry these programs out and we know now where they will be needed."

It is no secret. I am sure this government has a document in which it has put together its assessment of the winners and the losers under the free trade agreement. If it has not got it, it can borrow the ones from the banks and the trust companies, which have all done that exercise.

There is absolutely no question about where this dislocation will occur and, in my mind, there is absolutely no question in an honest discussion of the free trade agreement that it will be part and parcel of that. The members know that it is coming. It will come in a different form this time perhaps than we have seen it on previous occasions.

I do not think it will be limited solely to industrial workers this time. I think it will start there but I think it will be broader based than that. It will be of a different nature than we have seen before, but it will come and members know it will come.

Whether or not one agrees with this government's stance on the free trade agreement, the one thing that cannot be denied is that it has been aware of the agreement itself, of the ramifica-

tions of the agreement and of what this government should be doing now to get ready to look after the people in this province.

I do not think there is any question about that. I am not a fan of the Peterson government's approach to the free trade agreement. I am not an advocate of what they did. But I will say this: They knew early enough that there was something wrong with this and they had sufficient lead time to put in place the programs and the spending priorities to allow for a reasonable period of adjustment. But they have not done that.

I heard members in here this afternoon take the very political line that this government was the smartest and the best and the most clever in the country in analysing the free trade agreement. Maybe they were, but that is not what will matter to the people who will sit across from their desks in their offices in the next few years.

They will look at government members and they will want an honest answer, not about their politics, not about their program; they will want to know what happens to them and to their families. I will tell them this afternoon to put away its little political flag-waving, to put away all of that rhetoric and to get ready to deal with those people honestly.

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**Mrs. Marland:** It is always very difficult to rise in this Legislature and follow the member for Oshawa, who is the only member that I am aware of in this Legislature who stands and speaks without any notes, without any references and is always so eloquent. It is not that I always agree with him, but I have to acknowledge the fact that the member for Oshawa is a very convincing speaker.

In standing to speak in support of this resolution this afternoon, I want to read into the record again what the resolution actually says, because I want to explain why, as a member of the Progressive Conservative caucus in Ontario, I am supporting this resolution.

I also want to detach myself immediately, as a Progressive Conservative, from some of the comments of the official opposition, the New Democratic Party in Ontario. I am supporting it because of the wording of the resolution. I am not supporting it because of some of their comments, which criticize our Prime Minister, Brian Mulroney, and our federal government colleagues in Ottawa.

I think, quite frankly, it is time that the free trade agreement between Canada and the United States was put to rest in terms of its completion. It

is very obvious that the mandate on the subject of free trade in Canada has been very well expressed by the electorate in Canada. There is no question that the free trade agreement is now a mandate to the federal House, and we look forward to the rhetoric stopping and the criticism subsiding and to getting on with the practical implementation of what will become in the history of Canada one of the most important agreements ever developed.

In rising to support this motion, I want to read what the motion says. It says that this is a motion of urgent public importance requiring immediate consideration:

"namely, the refusal of the Liberal government to honour its responsibility for and its commitments to working people in the area of job protection and labour adjustment—specifically, in the face of two plant closures announced within the last week, its refusal to do more than to pass the legislative buck to the federal government, even though jurisdiction for employment standards, labour relations and pensions is provincial; and its refusal, three and a half years after making the commitment in the 1985 accord that brought it to power, to 'reform job security legislation, including notice and justification of layoffs and plant shutdowns...'"

I suppose the first thing I would have to say to my colleagues in the New Democratic Party is: What else would they have expected? Surely, their naiveté would not have blinded them to the knowledge that, while their NDP members in 1985 climbed so eagerly into the throne room with the Liberals when the Liberals were crowned as the government, although they in fact had not been elected as the government in May 1985—I think that is something that we sometimes lose sight of in Ontario, the fact that in 1985, 48 Liberal members were elected as opposed to 52 Tory members—the crowning that went on with that accord between the Liberals and the New Democratic Party certainly has come home to roost in terms of what now, three and a half years later, my colleagues the New Democratic members are having to face.

The reality of this motion that they have had to place today for an emergency debate only further confirms why they were naïve at best, but very much living in an unreal world, if they ever felt that all the promises that were made by this Ontario Liberal government would be fulfilled.

Among those promises, we have yet another program announced by the Liberal government which is not being fulfilled. I am talking about the Transitions program. The Transitions program was announced as an election goody on

August 4, 1987, and, in fact, it was made retroactive to January 1, 1987. Isn't that marvelous? It was not only a new program; it was going to be retroactive for that entire year. It was given a fund of \$14 million and it was to help a targeted 6,500 workers. Each worker would use an average of \$2,100 of the benefit with their individual credits.

The second thing was that participants would be provided with a training credit of \$5,000 redeemable over a two-year period. Training could be undertaken with a new employer or an institution. A new skills training program such as this was, as they said at that time, "a further commitment to maintaining the flexible and well-trained workforce Ontario needs for economic competitiveness."

The reality is that the Premier was charging around Ontario last year on his white horse, pulling behind it, I suppose, his sleigh of promises and misleading the people of Ontario on a number of subjects. We have now learned that in fact the fund for this Transitions program was scaled down to a mere \$8 million on April 1, 1988. The reason given was that it was due to "a lack of program uptake." In fact, that lack of program uptake as of September 30, 1988, shows that only 1,787 workers applied to the program in two years. That is rather a sad commentary when we were looking at a promise of 6,500 workers.

We were looking at a program targetted for 6,500 workers per year. Sadly, this 1,787 workers in two years is not a very good reflection of the commitment of what this program was going to do for these workers in Ontario. I think it would not take a great deal of brilliance on the part of the Liberal government to see why the program is not working.

Perhaps the basic area they should be looking at is the program delivery itself. When they look at that and they look at the marketplace where these workers could be employed in order to make it work, then it would be a very simple formula to give these people who want to work a job opportunity, because they would be trained for where the work is and what the jobs actually are.

We hear an awful lot about different bodies, advisory councils and so forth that the Liberal Premier of this province keeps announcing. Whether or not this gives him a vehicle for political appointments of his friends, I suppose, can always be discussed. I think with all the hoopla with which the Premier's Council was announced when it was appointed—this was to be the Ontario government's blue-ribbon advisory



body on economic and industrial strategy—one would think with so much fanfare that the very least the Premier could do would be to listen to his own council. This same council has been advising the Premier about exactly what the problem is for these workers and what the solutions would be.

Sadly, because of the limited amount of time in this debate, I am not able to include for the benefit of the members present what exactly the Premier's Council said needed to be done and what exactly it is that the Premier has chosen to ignore by not listening to his own council's advice in this situation.

**Mr. Campbell:** I am pleased today to participate in this debate because, as the member for Oshawa so ably pointed out, I am one of the few people in this House, I guess, who has had to face someone who has been out of a job because of the economic situation.

I wish the provisions of the present Employment Standards Act had been in place when I had to face those people; had been in place in 1981 when I was chairman of the regional welfare board, with the number of people who came to my desk after their unemployment insurance benefits had run out, because this Employment Standards Act provides the best severance pay provisions in North America.

Ontario is the only jurisdiction in Canada, other than the federal one, that has any severance pay requirements at all; not only that, last year this Legislature significantly improved these provisions by expanding the coverage to include more workers in situations other than a complete closure of a company.

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Notice of termination provisions were also enhanced last year. Notice provisions for individual layoffs were extended. In addition, the notice requirement to the Minister of Labour was enhanced. Companies must state the reasons for plant closures or other large-scale permanent layoffs and their adjustment plans. Until this information is received by the minister, the minimum required statutory notice period for the affected workers cannot begin.

In addition to statutory protections, the province has adjustment programs to assist laid-off workers. The Ministry of Labour provides an employee counselling program that provides vocational and personal counselling to displaced workers. It is cost-shared with employers and is tailored to the needs of the affected workers in each layoff situation.

Firestone Canada in Hamilton closed last year, putting 1,300 people out of work. A very successful counselling program was established with more than 75 per cent of the affected workers choosing to participate.

At present, a similar program has been established to assist workers affected by Mac-Millan Bloedel's waferboard plant closure in Thunder Bay. Counselling for the 115 employees will begin next week, well in advance of the closure date in mid-January 1989.

The Ministry of Labour also participates in the federal industrial adjustment services labour-management committees. These committees assist workers in finding jobs and accessing various government assistance programs.

In addition, the Ministry of Skills Development has a training initiative called Transitions for unemployed workers 45 years of age or older. It provides up to \$5,000 over a two-year period for training costs incurred by these individuals.

The industrial restructuring commissioner, Malcolm Rowan, has been active in northern Ontario with regard to the forest products industry and its rationalization, to ensure a solid future for this important northern Ontario sector. A national strategy to ensure adequate adjustment measures for this worthwhile industry will be an essential complement to such provincial programs.

I want to talk a bit about the adjustment program and some of the history behind it because I think it is important that—

**Mr. Laughren:** Well said. I'm on Sterling's side.

**Mr. Campbell:** When the member says that, I think there is a lot of agreement in the proposals and some of the programs this government has initiated.

**Mr. Laughren:** Wait a minute now. Don't push it.

**Mr. Campbell:** I will not put words in the mouth of the member for Nickel Belt (Mr. Laughren). However, if he was here for the first part of the speech, he would realize that some of these initiatives were not there when Sudbury was going through its difficult times, and I think they would have helped with a lot of the things that happened in 1981.

The adjustment program was developed in 1981 partially because of the economic situation we were facing. The plant closure review and employment adjustment branch, in conjunction with the Ministry of Colleges and Universities, was to provide employees affected by permanent job loss, especially due to plant—

**An hon. member:** Sounds like a Jim Gordon speech!

**Mr. Campbell:** That is a little much; surely the member would not really mean that—due to plant closures, with professional vocational counselling assistance such as skills assessment, job search techniques, access to retraining and pre-retirement counselling.

The adjustment program focuses on assisting groups of employees affected by large-scale cutbacks and closures, usually 50 or more employees, though smaller numbers are assisted in special circumstances such as single-industry communities. At that time, in 1981, a single industry was really being affected by the economic situation in our country and in our province and was especially hard hit in northern Ontario.

Our community in Sudbury had to come up with a lot of its own solutions for some of the programs being dealt with today, precisely because of our community's initiatives in the regional chairman's committee to see that this kind of thing did not happen again, because some of these programs were not in place until now.

Had we had those programs in place, I think a lot of the things we had to deal with we would have had to deal with in a less serious manner. But today we are seeing a lot of the results of some of those initiatives—the Ministry of Labour's wire rope testing plant coming to Sudbury, for example—and dealing in very important means to diversify the economy. With this kind of program, had it been in place, it would have been easier for us to deal with those kinds of dislocations.

The program involves both group and individual counselling offered in modules, before or after termination. The basic module, which consists of skill identification and transferability, planning and decision-making, resumé writing and job interview skills, requires 18 to 24 hours. Other modules, such as understanding the emotional impact of job loss, retraining opportunities, starting a small business, financial planning and retirement counselling, may add 12 or more hours to the program time. Each program is tailored to the needs of the employees involved.

Programs are normally delivered by counselors in the colleges of applied arts and technology in the areas in which the closures occur. The industrial adjustment service of Canada Employment and Immigration and the employment adjustment branch often work together in these situations. While the IAS establishes adjustment committees that handle placement, the program

prepares employees for the work of the committee, since those people who have made informed decisions about their futures have marketable resumé in hand, have sharpened their job interview skills and are more likely to succeed in obtaining new positions and in impressing employers enough to be interested in hiring other displaced workers.

These programs are cost-shared by the employment adjustment branch and the employer. In insolvent situations—

**Mr. R. F. Johnston:** Stop ad libbing.

**Mr. Laughren:** Write your own speeches.

**Mr. Campbell:** I did write my own speech. This is good stuff. Members have to go along with it here.

**Mr. Villeneuve:** Jimmy Gordon helped you.

**Mr. Campbell:** No. That is the second reference that has been made to the former member for Sudbury and I can honestly say I am sure that was not the case.

**Mrs. Marland:** I want Jimmy Gordon back.

**Mr. Campbell:** Oh, you do? Well, there are others who would disagree, however.

In insolvent situations, the branch assumes the total cost. Accessibility of the program to employees is an important issue. Therefore, not only is there no cost to participants, but when program delivery is outside of work hours or after termination, they are also reimbursed if they incur additional child care and transportation costs by living more than 25 kilometres away.

Although some other jurisdictions have provided job search seminars for employees in specific plant closure situations, to the best of our knowledge, there are no other established programs such as ours in North America. Other jurisdictions have expressed keen interest in our expertise and the material we have developed has been used in five other provinces.

Clearly, then, the Ontario government is active in providing both protection and adjustment assistance for workers facing layoff, but it was also clear to the Minister of Labour, as he said earlier, that there is a need for a national strategy to ensure the increasing pressures of a free trade agreement are adequately met.

**Mr. Harris:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I found the speeches today very good and exceptional. It was an important debate and an important motion that was put forward. I seek unanimous consent to extend the hours and carry this on for another hour or so, if members are so inclined.



**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

allotted for this emergency debate has now expired.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. M. C. Ray):** We do not have unanimous consent. The time

The House adjourned at 6 p.m.

**ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS\***  
(130 seats)

First Session, 34th Parliament

**Lieutenant Governor: Hon. Lincoln M. Alexander, PC, QC**

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|---|--|
| <p>Adams, Peter (Peterborough L)<br/>           Allen, Richard (Hamilton West NDP)<br/>           Ballinger, William G. (Durham-York L)<br/>           Beer, Charles (York North L)<br/>           Black, Kenneth H. (Muskoka-Georgian Bay L)<br/>           Bossy, Maurice L. (Chatham-Kent L)<br/> <b>Bradley, Hon. James J.</b>, Minister of the Environment (St. Catharines L)<br/>           Brandt, Andrew S. (Sarnia PC)<br/>           Breaugh, Michael J. (Oshawa NDP)<br/>           Brown, Michael A. (Algoma-Manitoulin L)<br/>           Bryden, Marion (Beaches-Woodbine NDP)<br/>           Callahan, Robert V. (Brampton South L)<br/>           Campbell, Sterling (Sudbury L)<br/> <b>Caplan, Hon. Elinor</b>, Minister of Health (Oriole L)<br/>           Carrothers, Douglas A. (Oakville South L)<br/>           Charlton, Brian A. (Hamilton Mountain NDP)<br/>           Chiarelli, Robert (Ottawa West L)<br/>           Cleary, John C. (Cornwall L)<br/>           Collins, Shirley (Wentworth East L)<br/> <b>Conway, Hon. Sean G.</b>, Minister of Mines (Renfrew North L)<br/>           Cooke, David R. (Kitchener L)<br/>           Cooke, David S. (Windsor-Riverside NDP)<br/>           Cordiano, Joseph (Lawrence L)<br/>           Cousens, W. Donald (Markham PC)<br/>           Cunningham, Dianne E. (London North PC)<br/>           Cureatz, Sam L. (Durham East PC)<br/> <b>Curling, Hon. Alvin</b>, Minister of Skills Development (Scarborough North L)<br/>           Daigeler, Hans (Nepean L)<br/>           Dietsch, Michael M. (St. Catharines-Brock L)<br/> <b>Eakins, Hon. John F.</b>, Minister of Municipal Affairs (Victoria-Haliburton L)<br/> <b>Edighoffer, Hon. Hugh A.</b>, Speaker (Perth L)<br/>           Elliot, R. Walter (Halton North L)<br/> <b>Elston, Hon. Murray J.</b>, Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet (Bruce L)<br/>           Epp, Herbert A. (Waterloo North L)<br/>           Eves, Ernie L. (Parry Sound PC)<br/>           Farnan, Michael (Cambridge NDP)<br/>           Faubert, Frank (Scarborough-Ellesmere L)<br/>           Fawcett, Joan M. (Northumberland L)<br/>           Ferraro, Rick E. (Guelph L)<br/>           Fleet, David (High Park-Swansea L)</p> | <p><b>Fontaine, Hon. René</b>, Minister of Northern Development (Cochrane North L)<br/> <b>Fulton, Hon. Ed</b>, Minister of Transportation (Scarborough East L)<br/>           Furlong, Allan W. (Durham Centre L)<br/> <b>Grandmaître, Hon. Bernard C.</b>, Minister of Revenue (Ottawa East L)<br/>           Grier, Ruth A. (Etobicoke-Lakeshore NDP)<br/>           Haggerty, Ray (Niagara South L)<br/>           Hampton, Howard (Rainy River NDP)<br/>           Harris, Michael D. (Nipissing PC)<br/>           Hart, Christine E. (York East L)<br/>           Henderson, D. James (Etobicoke-Humber L)<br/> <b>Hošek, Hon. Chaviva</b>, Minister of Housing (Oakwood L)<br/>           Jackson, Cameron (Burlington South PC)<br/>           Johnson, Jack (Wellington PC)<br/>           Johnston, Richard F. (Scarborough West NDP)<br/>           Kanter, Ron (St. Andrew-St. Patrick L)<br/> <b>Kerrio, Hon. Vincent G.</b>, Minister of Natural Resources (Niagara Falls L)<br/>           Keyes, Kenneth A. (Kingston and The Islands L)<br/>           Kormos, Peter (Welland-Thorold NDP)<br/>           Kozyra, Taras B. (Port Arthur L)<br/> <b>Kwinter, Hon. Monte</b>, Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Wilson Heights L)<br/>           Laughren, Floyd (Nickel Belt NDP)<br/>           LeBourdais, Linda (Etobicoke West L)<br/>           Leone, Laureano (Downsview L)<br/>           Lipsett, Ron (Grey L)<br/>           Lupusella, Tony (Dovercourt L)<br/>           MacDonald, Keith (Prince Edward-Lennox L)<br/>           Mackenzie, Bob (Hamilton East NDP)<br/>           Mahoney, Steven W. (Mississauga West L)<br/> <b>Mancini, Hon. Remo</b>, Minister without Portfolio (Essex South L)<br/>           Marland, Margaret (Mississauga South PC)<br/>           Martel, Shelley (Sudbury East NDP)<br/>           Matrundola, Gino (Willowdale L)<br/>           McCague, George R. (Simcoe West PC)<br/>           McClelland, Carman (Brampton North L)<br/>           McGuigan, James F. (Essex-Kent L)<br/>           McGuinty, Dalton J. (Ottawa South L)<br/>           McLean, Allan K. (Simcoe East PC)<br/> <b>McLeod, Hon. Lyn</b>, Minister of Colleges and Universities (Fort William L)<br/>           Miclash, Frank (Kenora L)</p> |
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Miller, Gordon I. (Norfolk L)  
 Morin, Gilles E. (Carleton East L)  
 Morin-Strom, Karl E. (Sault Ste. Marie NDP)  
 Neumann, David E. (Brantford L)  
 Nicholas, Cindy (Scarborough Centre L)  
 Nixon, J. Bradford (York Mills L)  
**Nixon, Hon. Robert F.**, Deputy Premier,  
 Treasurer of Ontario and Minister of Eco-  
 nomics and Minister of Financial Institutions  
 (Brant-Haldimand L)  
**Oddie Munro, Hon. Lily**, Minister of Culture  
 and Communications (Hamilton Centre L)  
 Offer, Steven (Mississauga North L)  
**O'Neil, Hon. Hugh P.**, Minister of Tourism and  
 Recreation (Quinte L)  
 O'Neill, Yvonne (Ottawa-Rideau L)  
 Owen, Bruce (Simcoe Centre L)  
**Patten, Hon. Richard**, Minister of Government  
 Services (Ottawa Centre L)  
 Pelissero, Harry E. (Lincoln L)  
**Peterson, Hon. David R.**, Premier and Presi-  
 dent of the Council and Minister of Inter-  
 governmental Affairs (London Centre L)  
 Philip, Ed (Etobicoke-Rexdale NDP)  
**Phillips, Hon. Gerry**, Minister of Citizenship  
 (Scarborough-Agincourt L)  
 Poirier, Jean, Deputy Speaker and Chairman of  
 the Committees of the Whole House (Prescott  
 and Russell L)  
 Pollock, Jim (Hastings-Peterborough PC)  
 Polsinelli, Claudio (Yorkview L)  
 Poole, Dianne (Eglinton L)  
 Pope, Alan W. (Cochrane South PC)  
 Pouliot, Gilles (Lake Nipigon NDP)  
 Rae, Bob (York South NDP)  
**Ramsay, Hon. David**, Minister of Correctional  
 Services (Timiskaming L)  
 Ray, Michael C., Deputy Chairman of the  
 Committees of the Whole House (Windsor-  
 Walkerville L)  
 Reville, David (Riverdale NDP)  
 Reycraft, Douglas R. (Middlesex L)

**Riddell, Hon. Jack**, Minister of Agriculture and  
 Food (Huron L)  
 Roberts, Marietta L. D. (Elgin L)  
 Runciman, Robert W. (Leeds-Grenville PC)  
 Ruprecht, Tony (Parkdale L)  
**Scott, Hon. Ian G.**, Attorney General  
 (St. George-St. David L)  
 Smith, David W. (Lambton L)  
**Smith, Hon. E. Joan**, Solicitor General  
 (London South L)  
 Sola, John (Mississauga East L)  
**Sorbara, Hon. Gregory S.**, Minister of Labour  
 (York Centre L)  
 South, Larry (Frontenac-Addington L)  
 Sterling, Norman W. (Carleton PC)  
 Stoner, Norah (Durham West L)  
 Sullivan, Barbara (Halton Centre L)  
**Sweeney, Hon. John**, Minister of Community  
 and Social Services (Kitchener-Wilmot L)  
 Tatham, Charlie (Oxford L)  
 Velshi, Murad (Don Mills L)  
 Villeneuve, Noble (Stormont, Dundas and Glen-  
 garry PC)  
**Ward, Hon. Christopher C.**, Minister of  
 Education (Wentworth North L)  
 Wildman, Bud (Algoma NDP)  
**Wilson, Hon. Mavis**, Minister without Portfolio  
 (Dufferin-Peel L)  
 Wiseman, Douglas J. (Lanark-Renfrew PC)  
**Wong, Hon. Robert C.**, Minister of Energy  
 (Fort York L)  
**Wrye, Hon. William**, Minister of Consumer and  
 Commercial Relations (Windsor-Sandwich L)

\*The alphabetical list of members appears in each issue. Lists of the members of the executive council, parliamentary assistants and members of committees, brought up to date as necessary, are published in Hansard in the first and last issues of each session and on the first sitting day of each month.

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Ontario  
Parliament

No. 113

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# Hansard

# Official Report of Debates

## Legislative Assembly of Ontario

**First Session, 34th Parliament**  
Wednesday, November 30, 1988

Speaker: Honourable Hugh A. Edighoffer  
Clerk of the House: Claude L. DesRosiers

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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Wednesday, November 30, 1988

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayers.

## ANNUAL REPORT, OFFICE OF THE PROVINCIAL AUDITOR

**Mr. Speaker:** I beg to inform the House that I am today laying upon the table the annual report of the Provincial Auditor of Ontario for the year ended March 31, 1988.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### TRUCKING INDUSTRY

**Mr. Morin-Strom:** With the federal election now behind us, the duplicity of this Liberal Party on the free trade issue is becoming more and more evident every day. The Premier (Mr. Peterson) totally abandoned his own election mandate to stop a bad deal. Now he refuses to protect workers and communities that face serious restructuring and plant closures.

The Ontario Liberals prefer to use the federal government as a whipping boy for doing nothing about adjustment assistance. Even though jurisdiction for employment standards, labour relations and pensions is provincial, this government refuses to act on the Premier's Council recommendation that the government "develop a comprehensive approach to meeting the adjustment needs of workers."

In fact, the real actions of this government are to promote free trade at any cost to Ontario. While transportation was exempted from the free trade deal, Ontario has still proceeded with the Truck Transportation Act, opening up our \$2-billion Ontario trucking industry to an unlimited American invasion. I fully agree with the Canadian Trucking Association that this bill is "an act of bad faith on the part of the Liberal administration in Ontario that was so much against free trade, but apparently quite prepared to throw the trucking industry to the wolves."

The dishonesty of the Ministry of Transportation throughout the committee review of Bill 88 has been beyond belief. Surely it is time for this government to come clean with the people of Ontario.

**Mr. Speaker:** The member's time has now expired.

## BARBADIAN INDEPENDENCE DAY

**Mrs. Marland:** I rise today to recognize Barbadian Independence Day. On November 30, 1966, the island nation of Barbados became an independent nation within the Commonwealth.

Barbadians have been successful over the years in developing modern medical facilities, a social security system, a state-run education system and of course a successful tourist industry that has benefited the island and all those who have visited this Caribbean jewel. Barbados has become a popular vacation destination for Canadians. In 1987, 64,349 Canadian tourists visited Barbados.

In addition, a thriving community of Barbadian Canadians exists here in Toronto. We join them today in celebrating both Barbadian Independence Day and the beautiful island of Barbados. We thank the people of Barbados who have made their home in Ontario, and who through their living here have enhanced our opportunity to know and appreciate their culture and heritage.

## NATIONAL STUDENT CONFERENCE ON NORTHERN STUDIES

**Mr. Adams:** I recently attended the National Student Conference on Northern Studies. This brings together the best northern studies students from Canada's provinces and the territories. These students do research in the northern parts of the provinces and in the territories. This year, students from Alaska and elsewhere in the United States also attended.

Over 90 papers were presented on topics as varied as the teaching of native languages, glaciers, arctic sovereignty, northern lakes, day care legislation, whales, exploration history, Greenland cod, Arctic gardening and community health delivery.

Ontario was well represented by our two northern universities, Lakehead and Laurentian, and by students from Carleton, Guelph, Queen's, McMaster, Ottawa, Ryerson, Toronto, Waterloo, York, Windsor and Trent.

I was proud of the quality of this province's contributions. We support excellent work in northern Ontario and across Canada's north. In doing so, we contribute to this country's great

northern heritage. One example of co-operation between Ontario and the territories is the developing links between the Northwest Territories' Arctic College and York University and Trent University.

I commend the Association of Canadian Universities for Northern Studies for organizing this worthwhile conference. I congratulate all Ontario ministries that contribute to northern studies, especially the Ministry of Northern Development.

#### CORONER'S INQUEST

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** On August 14 of this year, Bernard Bastien was killed by the Ontario Provincial Police tactical rescue unit. The coroner's inquest that resulted from that death has now been going on for six weeks, at an approximate cost to date of between \$500,000 and \$600,000. Currently, the inquest has been adjourned while the lawyer for the family applies to the Divisional Court because of accusations that the coroner has been biased against the family and against the lawyer representing the family.

The application for that injunction to stop the coroner's inquest should have been heard this week. It is now likely to be adjourned because the lawyer representing the coroner will be asking for an adjournment. This will mean that the next court hearing will likely not be until April of next year, which means the coroner's inquest will be delayed until April of next year and then may in fact be cancelled at that time.

It seems appropriate to me and my party that what the government should be doing is abandoning the coroner's inquest today and calling a public inquiry to deal with what can only be called not just a tragedy for the people in my community, but a tragedy for the people of this entire province. A lot of questions need to be asked about what the TRUs do in this province, why they exist and whether we continue to need them in this province. That can be answered only by a public inquiry.

#### ASSISTANCE FOR THE DISABLED

**Mrs. Cunningham:** In 1985, the government changed the policy affecting disabled students who attend a post-secondary institution on a full-time basis. Under the old system, disabled persons attending university full-time were covered by the Ministry of Community and Social Services through its vocational rehabilitation services program. Today, the disabled who attend

school full-time must deal with at least two different ministries and several bureaucracies.

Joanne Ernewine of Thunder Bay is a victim of this bureaucratic red tape. Miss Ernewine, a sole-support parent, is determined to become a productive member of the workforce. We should not only admire this personal goal she has set for herself, but we should be helping her to achieve this goal.

There are many others who are trying to become productive members of society, but their hopes are diminished by the educational and financial barriers that for some have proved to be insurmountable.

Recommendation 106 of Transitions addresses the need for adequate financial assistance to enable low-income students to attend post-secondary educational institutions, as well as assistance in overcoming administrative barriers. I made reference to Transitions earlier this week and I again urge the Minister of Community and Social Services (Mr. Sweeney) to act upon this recommendation immediately.

1340

#### PROTECTION OF OZONE LAYER

**Ms. Collins:** Recently, we have been alerted to the health dangers posed by the decline over the last decade of the ozone layer, the layer of gas that shields the earth from harmful ultraviolet rays. The depletion of ozone is linked to the release of increasing quantities of chlorofluorocarbon compounds, or CFCs, and Halons, the major sources of which include refrigeration and air-conditioning products.

Although the Montreal protocol on the depletion of the ozone layer is a significant step forward in dealing with this problem, most experts agree that even more drastic and more rapid reductions in CFC atmospheric releases are needed in the near future to avoid epidemic increases in ultraviolet-linked diseases such as skin cancer.

The federal government has primary responsibility for taking action in this area, but there is considerable scope for provincial and municipal initiatives as well. The environmental organization Friends of the Earth has recommended a number of measures that lie within provincial purview, including establishing recycling centres for CFC reclamation and requiring the recovery of CFCs from disposed automobiles and refrigerators.

I urge the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley) to give serious consideration to these and the other recommendations put forward by



this organization and to report to this House as soon as possible on the government's plan for further action in this important area.

**Mr. Speaker:** The member for Markham, for 35 seconds.

### HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION

**Mr. Cousens:** I think it is high time the government did something about Highway 407. Highway 407, which had its beginning two years ago, is a \$650-million project. Unless we start spending more than \$25 million a year, it is going to be 25 years before it is finished. By then, the member for York Centre (Mr. Sorbara) is going to be in a rocking chair or an old folks' home and will not have a chance to enjoy it.

For the member for York Centre and for myself from Markham, let's proceed with speeding up the whole building process of Highway 407. It will help Metropolitan Toronto and York region. It will help all the people of Ontario.

**Mr. Speaker:** That completes the time for members' statements.

**Mr. McCague:** Mr. Speaker, I ask for unanimous consent to make a statement about a person who served many people in this Legislature over a period of years.

Agreed to.

### JANE MAHER

**Mr. McCague:** It was with great sadness that we learned of the death yesterday of Jane Maher, a young woman in the prime of her life and one of the unsung heroines of this political process. While members of parliament, by the very nature of our occupation, are in the limelight, we depend a great deal on the staff, the people who work behind the scenes.

They are the ones who do the research, verify the facts and keep track of what is going on; in other words, they enable us to do our jobs. Such a person was Jane Maher. She had worked in different ministries before starting with Dr. Stephenson in the spring of 1976. Jane worked with Dr. Stephenson throughout her various ministerial portfolios until late 1987 when Dr. Stephenson resigned.

Bette said that Jane, as principal secretary and office manager and later as executive assistant "kept the whole process working and ran the show. We couldn't have managed without her." All those who knew Jane were impressed by her warm personality, by the feeling that she was a person who really cared. She had a wonderful sense of humour, and as one friend said, she "lit

up the room the minute she entered." She was popular among her peers and highly respected by her employers.

At the time of her death, Jane was working for Dr. George Podrebarac in the pay equity branch of the Ministry of Labour.

On behalf of all members of this House, I would like to extend deepest sympathy to her mother and to her brothers and sisters in their loss. We are all richer by her example. We hope and pray that example will live on.

**Hon. Mr. Conway:** On behalf of my colleagues and from a very personal point of view, I want to join the member for Simcoe West in expressing our sorrow on this very sad occasion.

I knew Jane Maher very well. Of course, I had many dealings with her over many years while she was my contact in the office of the then Minister of Education. I can say from personal experience that all the member for Simcoe West has said is certainly true, and then some.

Jane was very helpful, always friendly; in some ways just an absolutely marvellous antidote to her boss—I am sure Bette would allow me to say that—because I can remember often having very lively discussions in this chamber and elsewhere with the then Minister of Education and meeting Jane in the corridors afterwards, and she was always very willing to help me in the many requests I put to her.

I just want to say that she served her minister and all of us very, very well. I was shocked to hear of her passing today, since it does not seem that many months ago when we had a very extended chat in the Whitney Block.

I am deeply saddened to learn of her passing and I want to join the member for Simcoe West in extending my personal sympathy and that of the government to her family.

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** We in the New Democratic Party would also like to extend our sympathy to the family of Jane Maher. I personally did not know Jane, but it is obvious from my colleagues and other members of the Legislature that her contribution to the government and to the Legislature was extensive. We extend our deepest sympathies to the family.

**Mr. Speaker:** When the official record is printed, I will make certain a copy is sent to the Maher family so that your words of sympathy are received by them.

### STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY

#### CRASH OF AIR AMBULANCE

**Hon. Mr. Fontaine:** On behalf of the Minister of Health (Mrs. Caplan), it is my sad duty to

inform the Legislature of the tragic plane crash near Chapleau last evening which took the lives of four people.

The plane was one of the Ministry of Health's air ambulance fleet. It was a King Air 100, operated by Voyageur Airways and stationed in Timmins, which crashed approximately six kilometres outside of Chapleau while on a flight to pick up a patient at Chapleau.

All of those aboard—the pilot, co-pilot and two air ambulance paramedics—were killed. There was no patient on board when the crash occurred.

The sequence of events is as follows:

At 9:53 last evening, a patient transfer was requested from Chapleau to take a critically injured person to Sault Ste. Marie. Estimated departure of the aircraft was 10:15 p.m., with an estimated arrival time at Chapleau of 10:45 p.m.

When the plane had failed to arrive by midnight, a search and rescue mission was initiated, and shortly after 5 a.m. today the crash site was found and it was confirmed there were no survivors.

Meanwhile, the patient had been transported by land ambulance to Timmins and is under care there.

Those who serve in the Ministry of Health's air ambulance service do so in a dedicated fashion. Many of our citizens owe their lives to these professionals. I know honourable members of this House will want to join the Minister of Health in expressing their heartfelt sympathy to the families, friends and colleagues of pilot David Townsend, co-pilot Bryon Bewart and paramedics Ian Harris and Donald Contant.

The investigation is continuing and the Minister of Health, along with Dr. Ron Stewart, medical director for the air ambulance base hospital program affiliated with Sunnybrook Medical Centre, and Terry Turner, supervisor, air ambulance, have gone to Timmins to meet with air ambulance staff.

1350

## CONTROL OF SMOKING

### RÉGLEMENTATION DU TABAGISME

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** Later today, I will be introducing for first reading a bill to restrict smoking in the workplace. The bill will prohibit smoking in all enclosed Ontario workplaces under provincial jurisdiction, except in areas specifically designated by employers as areas in which people may smoke. These designated areas will not be permitted to exceed 25 per cent of the total space of the workplace.

Within that basic standard, the legislation will allow employers and employees to work out no-smoking policies. Consultation with joint health and safety committees in the workplace will be required before an area can be designated to permit smoking.

This legislation, which I will describe further in a few moments, reflects the increasing concern about secondhand smoke, a concern which has led to a public consensus on the goal of reducing smoking in the workplace.

In this area, government has two responsibilities:

As an employer, the government has an obligation to determine policy regarding smoking in the Ontario government workplaces. My colleague the Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet (Mr. Elston) will outline for members the specific no-smoking policy that will apply in Ontario government facilities.

As a regulator, the government has a duty to propose legislation that will ensure a basic standard that will apply to all workplaces under provincial jurisdiction. The government now is fulfilling its responsibility through this legislation which prohibits smoking in all areas unless they have been explicitly designated as smoking areas. Under Ontario legislation, therefore, work areas in which smoking is permitted will be the exception rather than the rule.

This bill will apply to all workplaces that are subject to Ontario labour legislation. That covers approximately 3.9 million workers at some 233,000 workplaces, more than 90 per cent of the province's workforce including retail, commercial, manufacturing and mining operations, governments, hospitals, social service agencies and, of course, educational institutions. It will not, however, require the prohibition of smoking in areas of a workplace in which the public is served such as restaurants, bars and hotel lobbies. Outdoor work areas will be exempted, vehicles such as provincially regulated buses and the residential portions of facilities such as hostels and detention centres.

Ce projet de loi s'appliquera à tous les lieux de travail assujettis au code du travail de l'Ontario. Cela couvre environ 3,9 millions de travailleurs dans 233 000 lieux de travail, c'est-à-dire plus de 90 pour cent de la main-d'oeuvre de la province.

The basic standard set out in this bill will work hand in hand with municipal regulations. Municipal provisions that already regulate smoking in the workplace will stay in force so long as they meet the legislation's requirements. New



municipal bylaws will be permitted so long as they at least match the provincial standard.

By leave of this assembly, the legislation I am introducing today will take effect on July 1 of next year, and Ontario will become the first province in Canada to restrict smoking in the workplace.

The standard this legislation sets will form the basis of no-smoking regulations in workplaces throughout this province, including regulations in Ontario government workplaces, which my colleague will detail in just a moment.

It is now a little over a quarter of a century since governments first took steps to discourage the use of smoking tobacco by requiring warning labels on cigarette packages. Today, we are taking another step in the direction of a smoke-free society. The legislation that I am introducing today will do a great deal to hasten that day.

**Hon. Mr. Elston:** I am sorry our colleague the member for Carleton (Mr. Sterling) is not here today, because I think it should be mentioned at the outset that the member has been fairly adamant in addressing the issue of smoking in all workplaces. I think in the light of that consistent and fairly vocal presentation of his position, the member for Carleton ought to have been consulted before we delivered these speeches so that he could have been here—to revel, I suspect.

Anyway, further to the announcement of the Minister of Labour of this government's intention to introduce legislation regulating smoking in all enclosed indoor workplaces in Ontario, I would like to indicate my support for this initiative. As Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet, I believe it is the responsibility of the government to demonstrate its commitment to and support of the policy.

Therefore, I am pleased to announce today that as of March 31, 1989, smoking will no longer be permitted in Ontario public service and schedule 1 agency workplaces. The policy will apply equally to our employees and to those who visit our workplaces.

Achieving a smoke-free working environment will be beneficial for everyone, but it will not be easy for everyone. We are depending on the consideration of nonsmokers as well as on the co-operation of smokers to make this important initiative a success. As part of this initiative, we will be offering assistance to those employees who wish to enrol in smoking cessation programs.

I might add by way of an aside that we are hoping to build on the positive aspects of the

program that was implemented at the Ministry of Health not long ago. We are looking to that to provide us with guidance in assisting those people in a very sensitive way to deal with smoking.

The government of Ontario is committed to its role as a caring and model employer. I am confident that this policy is a positive step forward in the development of a healthy workplace.

## RESPONSES

### CRASH OF AIR AMBULANCE

**Mr. Laughren:** I wish to join with the Minister of Northern Development (Mr. Fontaine) in expressing our sorrow as a result of the air crash near Chapleau last night. I want to make sure members understand very clearly that this is not simply the delivery of an ordinary service; it is the delivery of a service with built-in dangers and, obviously, built-in sacrifices, and we must never forget that. I am sure it is not simply those of us in this chamber but people all across northern Ontario who join with us in our sorrow today.

On behalf of my colleagues, I want to express our condolences to the colleagues of the people who were killed in the crash, their friends, and their immediate families of course. On a personal note, I want to thank the Minister of Health (Mrs. Caplan) who kept me informed from early this morning as the events unfolded; I appreciated that very much.

I hope that we, as members, will be ever mindful as we think of this tragedy of that service which is provided to people in northern Ontario, of the risks and the sacrifices some of the people who provide that service take as a regular part of their job.

**Mr. B. Rae:** I want to add my condolences to the comments made by my colleague the member for Nickel Belt. I actually met Ian Harris, one of the paramedics who was killed, just a short few days ago in this Legislature. He was one of a number of ambulance attendants who, I am sure members will recall, were sitting up in the gallery on a day which had been chosen by their union as a day on which they would be lobbying the government about their work, their pay and their conditions.

I might add that one of the things I can distinctly remember having raised with me upstairs in room 351 by Mr. Harris, along with a number of other people who were there, was this very question of air safety. I hope there will be a thorough investigation of what happened. I think

it simply underlines the importance of this service to northerners, as well as it outlines the very real risks and dangers that are run by those people who work in our health care system trying to protect the health and indeed the lives of all of us. It shows us the debt we owe to all of them, and our heartfelt condolences and feelings go out to the families of the four men who were killed.

#### CONTROL OF SMOKING

**Mr. B. Rae:** I want, in the two minutes remaining, to say a few words with respect to the announcement made today by the two ministers of the crown. I would have thought that it would have been perhaps appropriate if more had been said on the government's side about the work of our colleague the member for Carleton (Mr. Sterling) who has led us all in this battle here, as have others in the House of Commons.

I might pay tribute to my good friend Lynn McDonald, who is a former member of the riding with which I had an acquaintance. She, along with others, took up a cause which, when it was first taken up, was not popular and was certainly not trendy and was one which was opposed by one of the most well-financed, well-heeled and highly lobbied industries going, the tobacco industry.

**1400**

Tobacco is a killer. There are lots of euphemisms we can use to talk about this subject, but there is no point in beating around the bush any more. We know that tobacco causes diseases which kill people, and we also know it is an addiction which affects literally millions of our fellow citizens. I would hope that in addition to making the announcements that have been made today, which I regard as a very minimal first step our government should have taken some time ago, we need to have a much more aggressive and helpful approach from the government with respect to the people who have what I would regard, frankly, as an addiction.

If we are going to have programs which say, "You should not smoke. You cannot smoke here. You cannot smoke there," we have to do more than talk about education in the schools. We have to do more to actively encourage people and help people to deal with the addiction to nicotine.

We look forward to proceeding with this discussion in the weeks and months ahead and look forward to hearing from the Minister of Health (Mrs. Caplan) about what she is going to do in her department to see that we really take this problem seriously in this province at last.

#### CRASH OF AIR AMBULANCE

**Mr. Pope:** In relation to the statement of the Minister of Northern Development (Mr. Fontaine), I know from my own experience that one of the most difficult times for a minister in the Legislature is when that minister has to stand up and announce just such an event as the minister had to announce today. I recall the Maple Mountain helicopter crash of 1984 with the loss of some lives, people who were working for the government of Ontario at the time.

From conversations with the Minister of Health (Mrs. Caplan) this morning, I know that all is being done to assist the families of the deceased and to reassure the community and those involved in the operation of the air ambulance system in northern Ontario of the concern of the government for a full and complete investigation and, if need be, some improvements with respect to the air ambulance system. I do not think it is a time for debating the public policy issues, although there are a couple associated with this event that will no doubt be dealt with at a later time.

The air ambulance system has grown throughout northern Ontario over the past decade. It has been established from one part of northern Ontario to the other, from the Manitoba border to the Quebec border and beyond. It has been successful in meeting the needs of northerners in large and small communities across northern Ontario, not just because of the commitment of this government and previous governments but because of the selfless dedication of those who work within the air ambulance system: pilots, paramedics, attendants, people in the hospitals, doctors, nurses, all of whom have given of their time and efforts over the years to serve their fellow northerners and to make sure they have prompt, adequate health care made readily available to them.

It has been a successful program, but with every successful program there are risks. Those involved in the delivery of this necessary service across northern Ontario—and there were 14,000 occasions when the air ambulance was used out of Timmins alone last year—are aware of the risk of flying in difficult weather conditions in the dead of winter across northern Ontario and willingly accept that risk, because they know the good they do for their fellow northerners, their fellow Ontarians, far outweighs that risk.

There were four people, the pilot, co-pilot and two paramedics, who gave their lives to perhaps save a life themselves and to improve the quality of health care for all of us. These residents of



Timmins were well known to us. They were very caring, community-minded people. We will miss them very much in our home town. We want to give our deepest condolences to their families, the small children who are left behind and to those who knew them well. We will all miss them in Timmins and we all pay tribute to them today for what they have tried to do to make our province and the lives of the people of northern Ontario much better for their efforts.

### CONTROL OF SMOKING

**Mr. Pope:** With respect to the statement of the Minister of Labour (Mr. Sorbara) and a follow-up statement by the Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet (Mr. Elston), we wish to congratulate the government on introducing the bill of the member for Carleton (Mr. Sterling) today. Clearly it is.

I do not think anyone in this Legislature can help but acknowledge the contributions of the member for Carleton, his relentless efforts over the years in private member's legislation and questions in question period, in asides to the Premier (Mr. Peterson) and to the member for Renfrew North (Mr. Conway) and to others on the government side about moving forward with progress on this very important public policy issue. Members will all appreciate and want to acknowledge today the efforts that he has made to bring this legislation forward and to make sure the public and the members of this House were aware of the importance of it.

To the member for Carleton, who I wish had been informed yesterday so he could be here, congratulations. He is no doubt watching these transactions. I know all members of the Legislature will want to join with me in paying tribute to the member for Carleton for making this an important public policy issue that all members of the Legislature must face.

### ORAL QUESTIONS

#### TEMAGAMI DISTRICT RESOURCES

**Mr. B. Rae:** I want to ask the Premier some questions arising from the statements that were made yesterday by the Minister of Northern Development (Mr. Fontaine) and by the Attorney General (Mr. Scott) on the subject of Temagami, which, I am sure the Premier will appreciate, have a symbolic importance extending far beyond the boundaries of Ontario. We seem to be getting a conflicting message.

The Temagami Wilderness Society has applied to the courts for a judicial review of the decision by the Minister of the Environment (Mr.

Bradley) not to hold an environmental assessment hearing with respect to one of the roads in question, the Red Squirrel Road.

I wonder if the Premier can tell us why, in that case, since that whole question is now in dispute and in fact is before the courts and has not been settled one way or the other, at the same time as that is happening his government is applying to the courts to remove the Indian band from being on that road when the subject of the extension of that road is directly before the courts of this province.

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** I think the Attorney General is in the best position to discuss some of the legal implications here.

**Hon. Mr. Scott:** The answer is that the application is being made by the government to refer the question of whether the road should be constructed in these circumstances to the Court of Appeal, because the blockade of the roads is undertaken at present by the native people. As the honourable member knows, their blockade is undertaken—and I do not criticize any good faith here—in support of their land claim with respect to 4,000 square miles in the Temagami area. Therefore, we have elected to ask the Court of Appeal, which will be hearing the appeal from the judicial dismissal of their land claim, whether an injunction or an intervention is appropriate at this time.

The wilderness society is not blocking the road allowance and, of course, its judicial review application does not impede any construction, or indeed anything else. But I am quite confident that if the wilderness society seeks to intervene in the court proceeding, it will be, if not welcomed, certainly permitted to play whatever role the court thinks is appropriate for it, so that at the end of the day, on this important and difficult and highly complex question, the court will have an opportunity to hear everybody who is concerned about this in the very land claim case.

**Mr. B. Rae:** It is not that complicated. The government is determined to build a road that the native people do not want to have built and the Temagami Wilderness Society does not want to have built. The Attorney General is turning this into a legal faldral in which people are going to end up confronting the government, when in fact it all has to do with whether or not a road should be constructed. That is what it is all about. That is what the issue is. The issue is: How seriously do we take the environment? How seriously do we take native rights? The answer from the government of Ontario is, "Not very seriously in either case." That is the problem and that is the issue.

Is the Attorney General seriously arguing that in the event that he is successful before the Court of Appeal and gets an injunction with respect to the occupation, the construction of the road will go ahead, even before the Divisional Court has been able to hear the application for the Temagami Wilderness Society? Surely he is not saying that the government of Ontario is going to go ahead and build a road before a court has had an opportunity to deal with the gutlessness of his colleague the Minister of the Environment.

1410

**Hon. Mr. Scott:** The honourable member always gets loud and angry when it is not going his way. If the honourable member thinks that this issue is not complicated, he is living in a completely unreal world.

**Mr. R. F. Johnston:** Depends on which side you are on in this one, that is all.

**Hon. Mr. Scott:** No, the member just has to listen for a minute.

The honourable member will want to understand that the Temagami area, which is the subject of the 4,000-square-mile land claim, has a very significant population largely dependent on the logging industry. We are concerned here, among other things, with the vitality not of William Milne and Sons lumber but of six other enterprises that are providing employment and support for the families, white and native, who live in that community.

We are also concerned about the environmental impacts. We are also concerned—and the honourable member will have to allow this to me; I have a long history with it—with native rights and native claims. Those are the issues, the competing interests that conflict in this problem in the Temagami area.

What we propose to do is this. The court has decided that the native land claim has no legal entitlement. After one of the longest trials in Ontario history, their land claim was dismissed by the court. They have done as they are entitled to do and probably should do: appealed that decision to the Court of Appeal. They do not want the road constructed pending the disposition of their appeal rights. What we are saying to the Court of Appeal is this: Does the court agree with that? If it does, fine.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you. It seems like a fairly lengthy answer.

**Mr. B. Rae:** I think the Attorney General has been less than candid with us, I really do. He knows full well that the government of Ontario is applying not to ask a court's opinion, not to say,

“What does the court think?” That is not what the government is all about. It wants that road built. That is the road it is determined to build. That is why the Minister of Northern Development was up on his feet. The government has decided that getting that road built is more important than settling the land claim. It has decided that getting that road built is more important than the environment.

I would like the minister to answer the specific question I put to him in my second supplementary. I would like him to answer specifically this question: Is he saying that if he is successful in persuading the Court of Appeal that an injunction should be issued against the Indian band, he will go ahead and build the road, regardless of the application by the Temagami Wilderness Society against the refusal of the Minister of the Environment to defend the environment? Is that what he is saying, yes or no?

**Hon. Mr. Scott:** That is not what we are saying. What we are saying is that the government of the day will be governed by the advice and opinion of the court.

The court can give its advice and opinion in one of two settings or both: first, in the Court of Appeal, where the Temagami Indian land claim is being dealt with and where we propose to bring our motion; second, in the wilderness society application, which of course is not under our control but is under the control of the wilderness society.

If an injunction in our favour is granted in the appeal case, we will have the right to enforce that injunction. If an injunction in favour of the wilderness society is granted in its case, it will have the right to enforce that injunction. That is the simple fact.

I just want to impress on honourable members that this government is not prepared to just barrel through. What this government is doing in a most complex and difficult situation, certainly the most difficult I have seen, with many competing interests, all of important entitlement, is to approach the court and say: “You are the masters of the situation. You are dealing—”

**Mr. Laughren:** That is what you would like people to believe. Nonsense.

**Mr. B. Rae:** Now you are being ridiculous.

**Mr. Pope:** Finally, the true answer.

**Hon. Mr. Scott:** No.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. New question.

#### ANNUAL REPORT, OFFICE OF THE PROVINCIAL AUDITOR

**Mr. B. Rae:** I have a question for the Premier arising from the statement of the Provincial



Auditor. I draw attention to the auditor's presence in the gallery this afternoon. The report is as thorough an analysis of government expenditure as we could possibly hope for.

I ask this question of the Premier because when he was in opposition there were some subjects that I am sure we will all recall he took a special interest in. One of them was government advertising.

I would like to read to the Premier the comments, just a few of the gems from the auditor's report on page 13. Speaking of this government, he said:

"Advertising goods and services were acquired with insufficient regard for economy. Many of the expenditures we reviewed did not result in the ministries or the secretariat receiving value for money. For example:

"Competitive selection procedures were not followed for subcontracted goods and services." I remember the man in opposition here saying how that had to happen in every case.

"Estimates and invoices were not supported with adequate detail.

"Excessive costs were incurred.

"Questionable expenditures were made" on advertising.

**Mr. Speaker:** Question?

**Mr. B. Rae:** If the Premier was critical of it while he was in opposition, why is he not doing something about it when he is the first minister in this government?

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** We value the auditor's advice on these matters. If there are things we can improve, obviously we will try to do so.

I do not know the specifics of that situation, but let me say that we have dramatically changed the system. We have an open and objective system now. It is not just awarded to friends of the government, as it used to be. I say that very objectively. Look across this country at the way these things happen. It is all open to review. The Leader of the Opposition should ask the advertising industry if it is considered fair.

I am not saying there are not some mistakes somewhere or other. We will do our very best to change that and to clean them up, and we value the auditor's advice. I say that this system is unique, and other provincial governments are now looking at Ontario because they want to follow this way, because we have shown leadership.

**Mr. B. Rae:** Whatever happened to "love me tender"? That is what I would like to know.

On the revenue side, the auditor shows that there are literally not just a couple of hundred

thousand, not even just a couple of million, but potentially over \$100 million and possibly even more of revenues being lost to this province because of tax evasion, particularly in the gasoline field, both imported and exported, and in terms of tobacco and other areas in which taxes are not being collected properly to the benefit of the taxpayer. It is costing us literally hundreds of millions of dollars. What is the Premier going to do to close these loopholes?

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** Let me say that we value the auditor's advice in these matters. It is one of the discussions that is always ongoing in the Ministry of Revenue: Should we hire more people to enforce the laws? There is no question that if we had more auditors, more accountants and more people going out and checking these things, there would probably be more payback. I have no problem with that argument at all. It is a constant source of debate on that matter. Some people here think we should not be hiring more bureaucrats, and one tries to make the best argument one can and the best recovery one can in those circumstances.

Certainly we will take the auditor's advice seriously where he is constructive and adds to provincial revenues. The member knows we are always interested in increasing provincial revenues.

**Mr. B. Rae:** The Premier ran in the last election on wanting to do more about education. No aspect of the auditor's report is more devastating than his comment on the computers-in-education program in this government. He says:

The computers "are incompatible with others in the marketplace and, therefore, any existing educational software is unusable....

"Inadequate emphasis has been placed on their effective implementation in the classroom.

"The training of teachers in the use of computers in the classroom has been generally lacking.

"Insufficient research into the effectiveness of computers in educating students has been conducted....

"The government's objective to create a Canadian computer and software industry has not materialized."

The program, according to the auditor, is now in need of a vital, strategic decision with respect to its entire future. I wonder if the Premier can tell us what he is going to do about this disastrous program.

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** The Leader of the Opposition is right. I notice my Tory friends

opposite sinking down in their seats. Really, he should have directed his question to them; they are clearly at fault. He is talking about the famous Icon situation; he is talking about the famous bionic beaver that was brought forward. We are still paying the price for that. We understand that, and my colleague the Minister of Education (Mr. Ward) can give the member chapter and verse.

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Do members know what is very interesting? I want to compliment the auditor in his perspicacity, because those very same speeches were then made in this House by the then critic in education, who is now the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley), with respect to the problems relating to the bionic beaver, or the Icon as it was called. We were right then and we are right now, and I appreciate the auditor finally catching up to our views on these situations.

**Mr. Brandt:** I would also like to take just a moment and compliment the auditor on a very thorough report, one that will be of interest to those of us in opposition and that I hope will be acted upon by those who are in government.

#### SEWAGE TREATMENT

**Mr. Brandt:** My question is for the Minister of the Environment. It relates to the auditor's report and it is with respect to some of the information that the minister has in fact released publicly relative to discharges of sewage in this province.

The auditor points out that there were some 1,400 instances of untreated or only partially treated waste that was discharged into the waterways in Ontario. That amounts to some 61 million cubic metres of waste that was discharged; but in addition, I am somewhat startled to read that some of those discharges were not in fact adequately reported and therefore did not show up in the numbers that the minister has released publicly.

My question to him is, why are those numbers not being reported accurately, and what does he intend to do to bring about a more specific and accurate reflection of these inappropriate discharges?

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** First of all, having been on this side of the House, the member recognizes the procedure that the auditor goes through. In other words, the staff of the auditor's department comes into the various ministries and makes suggestions. In fact, as the auditor's staff is in there speaking to our people—an external, objec-

tive person making those observations—what we do as a ministry is to implement them.

The ministry has already identified this particular problem—and, as I say, the auditor has been of some assistance in this regard—and is in the process of ensuring that all bypass occurrences that can be measured are fully documented and characterized as to the quantity and the quality and that these data are reflected in the ministry's 1988 discharge report.

The member has to remember that some of the observations which are made actually refer to a previous report. Of course, what we will do with the report that the member will see coming from 1988 is that he will in fact see that incorporated and those improvements made.

**Mr. Brandt:** One of the problems I see that the minister surely would agree with is that there are periods of time, up to some two years in some instances, when these sewage treatment plants are not in fact being inspected. It is very, very difficult to get an accurate assessment of the level of compliance and the level of efficiency of a particular plant if it is not being inspected. Why is it taking in some instances more than two years for his inspectors to get around to look at these plants?

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** We have developed a system with a dedicated staff which is dedicated specifically to doing just that.

The member would know, as I say, having had some experience in this regard, that you have a substantial portion of your people who are in the central office and some people who are in the various regional offices around the province. There are those who would like our regional people to be out inspecting various things, such as companies, municipalities and individual complaints from citizens. At the same time, there are others who would like them to be inspecting these plants.

I know the member opposite has criticized this government on a number of occasions for the number of staff. I think it has been close to some 500 staff that we have added to the Ministry of the Environment since I have become the Minister of the Environment, and there is a substantial amount of money involved. Those funds are being expended to try to meet all of the obligations that the ministry has and all of the expectations. The difficulty, I think the member would recognize, is in determining which shall be the priority on a given day or a given week.

I can tell him that what we are doing is having a dedicated staff—he knows that terminology—specific people who will be doing a plant



inspection. That will be done at least on a once-a-year basis at the minimum.

**Mr. Brandt:** In the minister's figures of October 1987 relating to the discharge of sewage, the Provincial Auditor indicates that the figures are in fact wrong for the 407 sewage treatment plants in Ontario, because the minister has not accurately pulled those figures together through his own staff, recognizing that many of those plants in the large municipalities are operated by the local communities and, in the smaller municipalities, generally are operated by or under the auspices of the Ministry of the Environment.

The minister's reports indicated, I believe, that some 280 or 281 of those plants were in compliance. Because the minister's figures were incorrect, can he give us a revised number as to how many of the sewage treatment plants of the 407 in Ontario were actually in compliance with his water quality guidelines?

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** As I understand it, there are general water quality guidelines for the discharges from sewage treatment plants. What we have done in the reports that have gone by is measured those against those general guidelines. I think what the auditor is making reference to is that in specific plants we have required, even on a specific basis, a greater guideline—in other words, a better performance than the general guidelines would suggest. What we have in fact incorporated into our 1988 report is the suggestion of the Provincial Auditor that it be measured against the individual guidelines for the individual plant as opposed to the general guidelines. I think the member will see that reflected very well.

In addition to that, as the member knows, we have expended a very significant additional amount of money to assist the various sewage treatment plants that operate—some of them are operated by the ministry and some by municipalities—in meeting those obligations by increasing the amount of money available on a percentage basis, for instance, from 15 per cent to now up to 33 per cent for those larger municipalities which previously, regardless of the circumstances, had only 15 per cent available.

What we are seeing is an accelerated program that is designed to improve the performance of those plants. What we see are remedial action plans in each one of those plants being initiated or in effect already. For those plants that did not indicate the results—

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you. That is a fairly full answer.

#### GOVERNMENT ADVERTISING

**Mr. Brandt:** My question is to the Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet and it is with respect to an issue that I raised with him some time ago and that he indicated he was going to be handling with the Treasurer (Mr. R. F. Nixon); namely, the methodology being used for advertising in the provincial government. I warned the minister that there was a pending problem in this regard. I specifically gave him some examples, and I find that there are more examples of a specific nature that the minister should be aware of.

In July 1985, the Ministry of Energy received five bids to undertake production of a film called *The Conserving Kingdom*. It is interesting to note that among those five bids, the winning bidder was not the lowest bidder but was, in this particular case, for the production of this film, the highest bidder. Can the minister indicate to this House why, in fact, the highest bidder for the production of this film was chosen?

**Hon. Mr. Elston:** I am afraid that I am not able to provide the honourable gentleman with an answer on this date on that particular item, but I will undertake to get back to him with specific information. I can tell the honourable gentleman something of a general nature about the manner in which we bring together quotes for large projects and the guidelines under which the ministries operate when they tender for production of materials and in fact for carrying out certain activities.

We do require the ministries to send out a proposal, take into account the number of firms that are interested and then create what is commonly called a short list to be assessed by the people even more closely than the original applications or interest statements by the firms. From that short list there is a choice, based on an evaluation process, that determines who is best able to do the best job under the circumstances.

In this case, as I have said to the honourable member, I am quite prepared to look into the details so that I can provide more information specifically as to how this particular event occurred.

**Mr. Brandt:** I want to be of further help to the minister, because I would like to save the taxpayers a few dollars and I think the only way that can be accomplished is if we make recommendations to the minister and then he follows through on them.



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This same company that produced the film *The Conserving Kingdom* was then asked to distribute the film. The cost of distribution of this particular film worked out to \$75 per unit, rather an interesting and a very significant cost for the simple distribution of the film. A company already under contract to the Minister of Energy (Mr. Wong) would have distributed that same film for \$10 per unit. It cost fully seven times as much for the company which originally was the highest bidder and produced the film and then brought in a figure to distribute the film for \$75 per unit. Can the minister explain how something that ludicrous can possibly happen?

**Hon. Mr. Elston:** From time to time, the honourable gentleman brings in specific cases like this which I, of course, have not had an opportunity to review.

I can agree in principle with his assessment of the initial set of circumstances which he has outlined to us here, but without having had the opportunity of examining for myself the particular material, I am unable to address his item specifically.

I can tell the honourable gentleman, though, that from time to time mistakes are made. If mistakes are made and suggestions made to us as to how to manage them much better—as the Premier (Mr. Peterson) has indicated, we are quite pleased to have the Provincial Auditor come in to make suggestions about how to tighten up management—we are pleased to have suggestions made by the opposition. Indeed, our own backbench people and our own parliamentary assistants and ministers come to our aid to make suggestions about how we can better make use of the taxpayers' dollars.

At no time, I say to the member, are we unprepared to take examples like that one and learn lessons as to how better to manage. I will specifically look into the full situation, because, as I indicated earlier, I am unaware of the full background to the information and I will get back and report. The former minister knows there are, from time to time, certain things that need clarification and I am quite prepared to provide that clarification and update when I have the opportunity to provide myself with a review.

**Mr. Brandt:** By way of a final supplementary to the minister, *The Conserving Kingdom* was obviously not talking about taxpayers' money, from the way in which this particular matter was handled. The auditor pointed out, with respect to five specific ministries which he looked at in detail, some of the same concerns we brought

before the minister; namely, that some of the advertising budget is out of control and that there is a laxity, if you will, on the part of those ministries with respect to looking after, in an adequate way, the interests of the taxpayers.

As there are not only concerns in connection with the Ministry of Energy and the specific one I have raised for this minister but also with regard to five other ministries, and, in addition, as we have raised this point with the minister before and he indicated he was going to talk to the Treasurer (Mr. R. F. Nixon) about this, could he perhaps share with this House any interim steps he has taken with respect to controls and any further steps he intends to take in addition to those he has already commented on briefly?

**Hon. Mr. Elston:** As Chairman of Management Board and charged with reviewing programs and delivery of advertising and otherwise through the Advertising Review Board, I can tell the honourable gentleman that we do try to manage as best we can to keep a very tight rein on what is spent.

From time to time, the member will know, there is a need to make information available to the public in the broadest possible way and sometimes on a very urgent basis; from time to time, we are asked by opposition people to put that information out. We do the best we can in managing our budgets. Having gone through this particular year, sort of the first full year, I can tell the member that we have had great co-operation from all the ministers involved and the people in each of the ministries in assessing what they are delivering through their advertising budgets and through their information services and looking at those in a manner which would allow them to be much more specific with the placement of advertising.

In fact, with respect to one item about a particular advertisement which this honourable gentleman raised with me before the summer recess, one we took steps immediately to address, we have tried to co-ordinate much better the manner in which a number of ministries place—

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you.

#### SEWAGE TREATMENT

**Mrs. Grier:** My question is for the Minister of the Environment and, of course, it concerns the damning indictment of his ministry by the Provincial Auditor. Last year the Provincial Auditor criticized the Ministry of the Environment for inadequate inspections, the standing committee on public accounts made specific



recommendations, which we were assured the ministry was implementing, and now today we find that most sewage treatment plants have not been inspected for at least two years.

Is the minister now at least prepared to admit that despite all the rhetoric, despite all the press releases, despite increased expenditures and many references to the municipal-industrial strategy for abatement program, there is no evidence of one whit less pollution being discharged into the province's waterways today than there was when he took office?

**Mr. B. Rae:** Exactly; exactly the same.

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** I do not think objective observers in this province would say that. One of the—

**Mr. B. Rae:** You have not been effective.

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** The Leader of the Opposition can misinterpret what he wishes and twist what he wishes around to whatever way he wants. That is his role as the leader of the official opposition, so we will let him do that.

I guess, as I explained to the leader of the third party, who understands these matters so very well, what we have done whenever the Provincial Auditor has made suggestions to us—as he did last year, as he does this year—is implement them. We do not even wait until the auditor's report comes out, because there is discussion that goes on with officials of the auditor's department and officials of the Ministry of the Environment. When he suggests improvements, we make those improvements.

I have outlined to the leader of the third party a number of the improvements we have made as a result of the observations of the Provincial Auditor. We will continue to make those improvements and we will continue to expend those funds and we will continue to add the staff necessary to carry out our obligations. I know we may be criticized as a government for increasing our spending or increasing our staffing levels but the reason we are doing it is to meet those obligations.

**Mrs. Grier:** The Provincial Auditor points out that in the 12 months ending December 31, 1986, 61 million cubic metres of untreated and partially treated sewage bypassed the province's water treatment plants. This box which I am holding up represents, in volume, less than one cubic metre. Can the minister give us any assurance that there is not today 61 million times the volume of this box going into our waterways from which our drinking water is obtained?

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** The member touches on two things. She touches, first of all, on the sewage treatment systems in Ontario. As she knows, through the answer that I gave to the leader of the third party, this government has in fact invested millions upon millions of dollars in the improvement of those plants. When we have identified the problems, when there has been an exceedence in a discharge, for instance, we provide the money to the municipalities to assist them in meeting those obligations.

There is a vast program going on across Ontario. In virtually all communities you see this happening where the actual construction is taking place, where the fine-tuning of the plants is taking place, in comparison with other jurisdictions. When I go to environment ministers' meetings with those in the rest of the country, I talk about infrastructure renewal, I talk about fine-tuning our plants, I talk about overcoming problems with their bypasses; those people talk about building a sewage treatment plant.

#### ONTARIO DRUG BENEFIT PLAN

**Mrs. Cunningham:** My question is to the Minister of Community and Social Services. The Provincial Auditor has identified serious deficiencies in controls over the Ontario drug benefit plan, including the fact that the Ministry of Community and Social Services could not verify billings from the Minister of Health (Mrs. Caplan) and that blank drug cards were not adequately safeguarded. Those were his observations. I am sure the minister is aware of them.

Could the minister tell us why the auditor is commenting on these matters in his 1988 audit when in fact the minister's own comprehensive audit and review branch exposed similar concerns in 1987? Would the minister not agree that he has been slow to address these well-recognized problems with the management of this important and costly program?

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**Hon. Mr. Sweeney:** The honourable member might be aware of the fact that the Provincial Auditor will often make use of the internal ministry audit material in order to put together his own report. That is the way it is done and that is fine. It is not at all unusual that our own internal audit report would have found those and that the Provincial Auditor, in reading those reports, would report the same thing. That is fairly normal.

With respect to the particular difficulty, for the last number of months we have been working very closely with the Ministry of Health on how



we can more effectively put controls on the costing it gets from the pharmacies and then transfers to us. That is an ongoing process.

With respect to the blank drug cards, the auditor is quite correct when he makes that report as staff visit individual municipal offices and find out they are not under the proper control. We agree with them. We have contacted our municipal offices and we have contacted our own program consultants in our area offices to sit down and to work out with them a way in which those blank drug cards can be kept under better control. Both of those are being looked at at present.

**Mrs. Cunningham:** I am sure the minister and I would both agree that as we look at controls, we do not also look at controls which could result in roadblocks. Both of us should try to keep that in mind as we proceed with the work of this government and the ministry. However, in the response of the deputy minister on September 22, he did indicate that he would take some action and advise the municipalities around this problem.

Given the response of his own deputy, will the minister tell us if he has indeed issued a directive to the municipalities outlining procedures to be put in place to regulate the use and distribution of drug benefit cards; this being a statement in September of this year?

**Hon. Mr. Sweeney:** Our first line is to ask our program consultants from our own offices to go in and meet with their counterparts in the municipal offices, for the very reason the honourable member raised in her opening comments. We do not want to so tighten up the system that the individual income maintenance workers who work with the recipients do not have a certain degree of flexibility in issuing those particular cards.

For example, each one of the workers, whether he or she works in the provincial office or a municipal office, has access to those cards so that he or she can give them out immediately in midmonth. The member will know that those cards are issued on a monthly basis to a recipient who is getting a monthly cheque, but if someone comes in in the middle of the month or some time during the month, that is done by hand and it is done by hand by that income maintenance worker. We need that kind of flexibility. We do not want to keep it overly tight, as the member indicated.

What we are doing is going into our municipal offices asking, "How can we achieve the goal of flexibility and at the same time the goal of

maintaining the system in a proper way?" Those things are being done.

I cannot respond specifically to the member's question: Has a directive gone out that it has to be done this particular way? I do not know the answer to that, but I do know that there are ongoing discussions and negotiations between our officials and municipal officials.

#### EDUCATION ASSESSMENT

**Mr. Matrundola:** My question is to the Minister of Education. I have received a number of calls and letters recently concerning the amount of education tax that cottage owners pay on their cottage properties. As well, in my recent householder, I included a questionnaire which asked if owners of cottage properties should be assessed education taxes on both their primary and their cottage properties.

Seventy-two per cent said they should not pay on both, with many adding that education taxes should come out of general income tax revenues or that cottage owners should pay a discounted amount of tax.

**Mr. Speaker:** The question?

**Mr. Matrundola:** One letter I received was from a senior citizen who lives in a condominium in my riding and has a cottage in Parry Sound. She pays education taxes at both locations. The education portion of the tax bill for her cottage increased by 65 per cent from 1987 to 1988, and the education tax makes up 60 per cent of her tax bill.

**Mr. Speaker:** Do you have a question?

**Mr. Matrundola:** Could the minister advise the House as to whether any plans are being considered to make the system fairer for those people who own recreational properties and who cannot even use the school system that they are paying for?

**Hon. Mr. Ward:** I would like to thank the member for his question and also thank him for giving me notice of his intent to raise this issue today. The honourable member should be aware, of course, that property taxes, whether for municipal or education purposes, are paid by all property owners and tenants in this province, and, in fact, that situation is one that has existed in this province for over 100 years.

It should also be noted that the province shares, in a very fundamental way, in providing funds for the costs of delivering education throughout this province. As a matter of fact, the provincial share of the total costs of delivering elementary and secondary education in this



province today is fully 58 per cent of the total. Grants are assigned on a basis that go a great distance in terms of equalizing the impacts from community to community. I think the question that the member raises really revolves around the issue as to how appropriate it is that all property taxpayers in this province and all of the tax assessment base in this province be utilized to share the impacts of education taxes. I think it is fair to say that the government takes the view that, in fact, it is appropriate that those costs be shared—

**Mr. Speaker:** Just in case there is a supplementary, maybe we will go on.

**Mr. Matrundola:** Many people complain when nonresidents purchase recreational properties in Ontario, and the previous government went even so far as to establish in 1974 a 20 per cent land transfer tax on recreational properties that are sold to nonresidents of Canada. My question is, is it fair that we demand that nonresidents pay a 20 per cent land transfer tax so they are discouraged from buying, in order to keep recreational property in the hands of Ontarians, while Ontarians feel they are being double taxed to support our educational system and at the same time they have a considerably restricted market if they want to sell their property?

**Hon. Mr. Ward:** I think the short answer is that, yes, it is fair that purchasers pay a land transfer tax, but I would want to stress to the member that the issue of a land transfer tax should not be confused with the issue of property taxes for recreational properties. I also want to address the other concern that the member raised in his initial question, that being the impact on seniors. It should be noted that the government, in fact, has appropriately designed a property tax credit system that goes a great distance in easing the property tax burdens of senior citizens in this province.

#### HOSPITAL SERVICES

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** I have a question to the Premier in the absence of the Minister of Health (Mrs. Caplan). It is regarding the auditor's report today. In the auditor's report he states, and I quote, "We estimated that in 1986 and 1987, the Ministry of Health received in excess of 2,600 public complaints regarding problems encountered" at our public hospitals across this province. One such problem was the following: "In one case, a patient's appendix was removed to alleviate pain in the abdomen yet the pain persisted after surgery. It was subsequently

discovered that the pain was due to an internal infection which was treatable with medication."

The Premier will know that there is no system in this province where complaints about hospitals, a patient's experience, can be adequately dealt with. There is not enough accountability. The auditor has pointed that out today. What does the Premier and his government intend to do to protect patients in this province?

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** I am sorry. I am not familiar with that part of the report, but I gather the Health estimates are on at the present time and I think it is a very legitimate question to raise with the minister. Certainly I will pass on the member's concerns to her. I do not have an answer for that particular part of the auditor's report today.

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** I have a supplementary. The fact of the matter is that this has been a problem that has existed for a long time and the Premier's government and the Minister of Health constantly respond to patients who complain, and to members who complain on their behalf, that it is up to the hospital boards to deal with each individual hospital's complaint.

1450

The Provincial Auditor's report says on page 101, "Clearly, the Minister of Health has the ultimate responsibility for the operations of hospitals, including the quality of care provided and the cost effectiveness."

I would like to ask the Premier: Will he assure the public that new systems will be brought in place to ensure accountability and a system that is responsive to patient complaints in this province?

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** The honourable member, and I guess the auditor, although I have not read his report, raise fundamental questions about the independence of the hospitals. Yes, we fund them, but a lot of them have independent boards. Should we be centralizing those things? Should we have a central complaints bureau?

I do not deny for a moment that there are problems. There are bound to be, with the virtually millions of cases that pass through our hospital system, but there is another line to investigate these matters through—the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario.

Obviously, if there are substantial complaints and if the system is breaking down, we have to look at new and more creative alternatives to that, but we have to think through very carefully if we want to create a new bureaucracy or a new infrastructure to handle the programs that are not handled in other ways.



This will be an ongoing discussion, I am sure. I hope my honourable friend will raise it with the Minister of Health during the estimates.

### FUEL TAXES

**Mr. Harris:** I have a question for the Solicitor General dealing with pages 121 and 122 of the Provincial Auditor's report on the question of fuel, which was alluded to by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. B. Rae) earlier. I would like to follow up on this with the minister.

The auditor says that discussions with the organized crime and racketeering section of the United States Department of Justice revealed in 1988 the problems with the lack of taxes collected on the fuel crossing the border. It says: "A Petroleum Excise Tax Task Force was set up to investigate organized tax evasion activities in the US and Canada, specifically in the state of New York and the province of Ontario."

Given that organized crime is being implicated and given that the auditor suggests we are talking in the range of up to \$100 million in lost Ontario revenue alone, can the minister tell us what role the Ontario Provincial Police and the racketeering squad of the OPP has had in this co-operative investigation and where they are with that?

**Hon. Mrs. Smith:** This is a detail of the auditor's report that I have not yet been able to get a report on. I will report back to the member. We are aware of the very extensive work done by this branch of my ministry, and I am sure that we will have a good response for him.

**Mr. Harris:** I am surprised that the minister does not know anything about it. We have heard about the problems there for the past six months. Surely, if I hear about it in the lowly third party in this Legislature—

**Mr. B. Rae:** Don't feel sorry for yourself.

**Mr. Harris:** Well, I do.

Is the minister telling me that she has not been informed? We are talking \$100 million. We are talking organized crime. We are talking every police agency in Canada, in the United States, in New York concerned about it. We are talking \$100 million in lost Ontario revenue.

Spot checks that the Americans have done—the minister has done none apparently—suggest at one point that the same tanker of fuel crossed the border 27 times. That means \$80,000 in lost revenue to Ontario.

**Mr. Speaker:** Question.

**Mr. B. Rae:** Deregulation will help that.

**Mr. Harris:** Yes.

It goes on to suggest that in a spot check of six tanker fuel trucks in the US, all six of them contained dye, which means those are also avoiding \$10,000 or \$15,000 in taxes.

**Mr. Speaker:** I am waiting for the question.

**Mr. Harris:** I am shocked that the minister does not know anything about this. I would like to know from her how we can expect to be detecting contraband, to be detecting drugs at the border when she has no knowledge and we do not seem to be able to control a whole blooming tanker truck full of fuel.

**Hon. Mrs. Smith:** That was a very dramatic presentation, and I am certainly impressed.

I really feel as if somehow \$100 million slipped deliberately through my fingers here. As members know, if we could raise some of the figures related to organized crime or profits made in drugs, we could be talking even more dramatic figures. We are talking, in fact, law enforcement. I certainly will get a report from my people on it.

I think the member knows that whenever I receive any advice from members of the opposition, in letters or in person, I look into it immediately and respond immediately, so if the member had all this inside information that was bothering him for all these months, he was most irresponsible not to have brought it to my attention.

### PUBLIC SECTOR PENSION PLANS

**Mr. J. B. Nixon:** I have a question for the Chairman of Management Board. I have been approached by a number of constituents who are former employees of this government and are now retired. They have asked me and I have undertaken to raise with the chairman the issue of their retirement pensions. I would like him to update this Legislature on the status of this matter.

**Hon. Mr. Elston:** With respect to the question of pensions, our discussions with the Ontario Public Service Employees Union and with teachers, dealing particularly with the reports we have received, have developed into a series of ongoing meetings which are being chaired by a representative from Treasury, with support from both the Ministry of Education and Management Board.

Actually, the human resources secretariat, which is my responsibility, is putting forth the material that is needed so that we can talk to OPSEU about the ongoing discussions on pensions, unfunded liability and otherwise. We are at the table at this particular time speaking about



a whole series of initiatives and issues with respect to the pensions for those who are already retired and in fact looking at the issues we must address, from a funding point of view and otherwise, for those people who are still actively working to the benefit of the people of Ontario.

**Mr. J. B. Nixon:** These former employees of the government, who have served the crown long and well, are extremely concerned that there not be a reduction in the outstanding pension obligations to these presently retired employees. I would like the Chairman of Management Board to address that issue, please.

**Hon. Mr. Elston:** I think it is fair to say that all of us in this Legislature and in the province are quite aware of the need to provide assurances that the question of the unfunded liability, which is outstanding and indicated in some of the reports to be of a fairly sizeable magnitude, does not get in the way of providing the pension income for those people who have already retired.

The essence of our discussions with these people—about which it appears a number of people opposite are not interested at the moment, obviously, Mr. Speaker—is designed to ensure that we have the wherewithal to fund and continue to fund the liability that the government and I, as the nominal and former employer of public servants, civil servants throughout the province, have assumed and must see is maintained.

We are taking the initiative now to deal with issues which have been raised in reports, to ensure that those people who are currently living on retirement incomes and those people expecting to do so will have a funded program in place for them.

#### LIQUOR CONTROL BOARD OF ONTARIO

**Mr. Philip:** In the absence of the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations (Mr. Wrye), I would like to ask a question of the Treasurer about that great corporation, the Liquor Control Board of Ontario, which is supposed to be making money for the Treasury.

Once again the LCBO is cited for gross mismanagement by the Provincial Auditor. Can the Treasurer tell the House why on 10 occasions involving—

**Hon. R. F. Nixon:** What page?

**Mr. Philip:** It is in the vicinity of page 145, I believe. I am sure the Treasurer has the page now.

Can the minister explain how on 10 occasions involving errors of \$1.2 million, a bank over-

charged or doublecharged the LCBO and it was not able to catch those mistakes on its own?

**Hon. R. F. Nixon:** No, I cannot.

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**Mr. Speaker:** Supplementary?

**Mr. Philip:** At least the Chairman of Management Board (Mr. Elston) says he is doing something about these things and looks concerned. The Treasurer does not even show concern.

**Hon. Mr. Nixon:** I am concerned; boy, am I concerned.

**Mr. Philip:** I think I have the Treasurer's attention.

Since 1983, the LCBO has been repeatedly cited in the auditor's reports about inadequate inventory controls. A few months ago, the LCBO gave assurances to the standing committee on public accounts that it was getting its house in order.

Can the minister explain why, in this report, once again the LCBO is cited for gross inefficiency in terms of inventory control? For example, "28 errors, totalling \$850,000 in approximately 100 domestic goods-in-transit orders. A journal entry for \$1.5 million of foreign goods"—

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you.

**Mr. Philip:**—"was entered twice in the records," and on and on.

**Mr. Speaker:** That seems like a good question.

**Mr. Philip:** Why is it that after all this time then the LCBO cannot get its act together?

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you. Treasurer?

**Hon. R. F. Nixon:** Actually, the answer is no, I cannot. I want to say further that I can assure the member that this publication came into the hands of the cabinet ministers at the same time as it came into the member's possession. Obviously, we will read it carefully and respond as strictly and efficiently as we possibly can and correct anything that is put forward in this. We understand the strength of these recommendations.

**Mr. Pouliot:** That has been going on for years. You said the same thing last year.

**Hon. R. F. Nixon:** That is fine. We are very concerned about the dollars because they come in as revenue, but also we would be concerned about what the member calls inventory control, particularly in the products it deals with.

Interjections.



**Mr. Speaker:** Order. The member for London North.

#### APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING

**Mrs. Cunningham:** My question is to the Minister of Skills Development. We can see that, in 1986, there were some 3,000 apprentices enrolled in programs and, in 1987, another 3,000 apprentices enrolled in programs at colleges and universities. My question is this: How many of the apprentices who were registered in the apprenticeship program in 1986 or 1987, whichever the minister likes, actually finished the program in which they were enrolled? How many of the 3,000 graduates received jobs in their field?

**Hon. Mr. Curling:** That is quite a detailed question that my critic has asked. I know we were concerned about the number of apprentices in the programs. At the time that we had put our proposal together there were 40,000 apprentices in the province. We had hoped our program would extend to 60,000 apprentices in five years. In the first year we have seen a growth of 5,000 apprentices, making the number 45,000. I think we are on the road to putting a lot more apprentices into the program.

The second part of the member's question asks how many apprentices got jobs in their field. That I could not answer in detail. I think the member knows too that it would be difficult for me to say how many apprentices are in what professions.

**Mrs. Cunningham:** If I had known the answer to the question, I would not have asked it. I think the whole public in this province would like to know the answer to the question. We have apprenticeship programs that are supposed to educate people—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**Mrs. Cunningham:** —so that they finish the course and get the job, and the minister does not even—

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. The main thing is to be able to hear the question.

**Mrs. Cunningham:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It serves little purpose to brag about the number of students who enter a course, since the really important statistic is the number of students who graduate, who are qualified and who get jobs. I think that was a reasonable question and I am very disappointed that the minister was not able to answer it today. I cannot believe he does not have these statistics. Can he

tell us why he has not bothered to obtain these statistics and how he conducts his program review so he can plan for the future?

**Hon. Mr. Curling:** The honourable member knows that apprenticeship programs vary according to the discipline; some would be for five years, some would be for three years and some would be for two years. She is asking me if I could give her precisely how many have been completed and in what program. She knows that although I am quite versed in all the programs that we offer, and in detail, I cannot give her precisely those figures.

I would be happy if we could get together at some time when I could go through our programs, showing her precisely what programs, how many individuals and when they would be completed. That would be very, very helpful to her. Also, I fully agree with the member from the opposition who said that in estimates they should get that in complete detail and we would lay out those figures precisely.

**Mr. Speaker:** That completes oral questions and responses. Petitions.

**Mr. Harris:** I have a petition.

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"We believe that all residents of extended care facilities, whether"—

Oh, I did that one already. Wait a second. I will pass till tomorrow and I will do the new one.

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** I could remind all members that we have other business to do here. Thank you.

#### REPORT BY COMMITTEE

##### STANDING COMMITTEE ON REGULATIONS AND PRIVATE BILLS

Mr. Furlong from the standing committee on regulations and private bills presented the following report and moved its adoption:

Your committee begs to report the following bills, as amended:

Bill Pr6, An Act respecting the City of Ottawa;

Bill Pr9, An Act respecting the Charlotte Eleanor Englehart Hospital.

Your committee begs to report the following bill without amendment:

Bill Pr32, An Act to revive LaPlante Lithographing Company Limited.

Motion agreed to.



## INTRODUCTION OF BILL

### SMOKING IN THE WORKPLACE ACT

Hon. Mr. Sorbara moved first reading of Bill 194, An Act to restrict Smoking in Workplaces.

Motion agreed to.

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## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### RETAIL SALES TAX AMENDMENT ACT (continued)

Resuming the adjourned debate on the motion for second reading of Bill 122, An Act to amend the Retail Sales Tax Act.

**Mr. Morin-Strom:** I appreciate the opportunity to get to speak on this very important tax bill, Bill 122, An Act to amend the Retail Sales Tax Act. In this bill, we see the government of Ontario increasing one of the most regressive forms of taxation that is available to this province. Their sales tax increased from seven per cent to eight per cent this year, creating a real hardship for working families, particularly those with low incomes. It would have been far better had this province looked to progressive tax measures that would have created a fairer tax system for people right across this province.

I find it appalling as well that the government imposed tax changes early this year, at the time of the budget address of the Treasurer (Mr. R. F. Nixon), and we are still awaiting the passage of the tax bills that were presented by the Treasurer at that time. We have a series of tax legislation bills that has to be addressed by this Legislature, and perhaps this is the one that deserves the most serious consideration.

The indications from this government are that it views sales taxes as an appropriate and growing source of revenue for the province. This has to be of particular concern to residents when we know that the federal administration, with Michael Wilson as Minister of Finance, is planning to proceed with the second phase of its tax reform measures. They are measures that change it from a system of income taxes, which at least in principle is based on fairness with tax payments based on ability to pay, to increased use of regressive forms of taxation, and in particular sales taxes.

Throughout the federal election campaign, we heard considerable concern expressed about the potential for a national federal sales tax that would be put together primarily as a combination, with the Minister of Finance, Michael Wilson, on the federal scene and the Treasurer of

Ontario. The Treasurer has not in the least discounted the possibility of a major federal sales tax on the order of anywhere from 16 per cent to 19 per cent in Ontario.

Having to pay a tax as high as 19 per cent on all consumer items as well as on services in the future—because this tax is going to have a much broader base than any sales tax we have seen in the past—will undoubtedly create a severe hardship for people right across the province.

In the work of the committees of this Legislature, I have had the opportunity to sit on the standing committee on finance and economic affairs for more than three years, and first on the select committee on economic affairs which focused primarily on the free trade issue and where our economic future should be in Ontario.

In more recent years, we have spent a considerable amount of time on the standing committee on finance and economic affairs dealing with budget proposals, looking at presentations from various organizations, industries, labour groups and economists in terms of where the province should be going with its spending programs, but most particularly in terms of financial concerns—where we should be going in terms of tax revenues and the desperate need for tax reform and an improvement of tax fairness throughout Ontario.

The Treasurer has indicated to us his interest in a national sales tax because he sees it as a tremendous revenue grab. The potential for Ontario being hit for a second year in a row with a tremendous tax grab is certainly there for us all to see. The particular increase we are talking about in this bill, the increase in the retail sales tax from seven per cent to eight per cent, is one of the largest tax grabs we have ever seen in Ontario.

In the last budget, his first budget after re-election, the Treasurer has taken the cynical approach of gouging the taxpayers of the province, because undoubtedly he feels this is the time he can get away with it without taking a political cost. I certainly am most fearful that we are going to see a similar tax grab from the new federal Conservative government in conjunction with the Treasurer, combining to create for us one of the greatest new sales taxes this province has ever seen.

I would like to see, and I am sure many members of this Legislature and the people of the province would like to see, a real effort by this government to improve tax fairness. This government should be using corporate taxes and personal income taxes to create a system of raising revenues for the province based on the



ability of people, corporations and businesses to pay those taxes.

Increases in retail sales taxes, increases the government has proposed on gasoline taxes which we will be voting on as well in the days to come, increases we are seeing on the local scene in terms of municipal property taxes—education taxes particularly—can really be laid at the feet of this Treasurer, a Treasurer who has refused to take the responsibility for improving tax fairness in Ontario.

The people of our province have a right to be concerned about the direction this government is taking and have a right to see where we are going to be going in the future, particularly on this issue of a national sales tax. We know the federal government has had a considerable increase in its deficit as a result of the first stage of tax reform. It is left with the need to gouge consumers with a tax increase. Its inclination is to do it with a very regressive, broad-based federal sales tax.

I suggest to the Treasurer that he has to maintain the independence of Ontario, the right of Ontario to determine what is fair and just for Ontario taxpayers, and I suggest he should use all due caution in participating in a federal tax scheme of such a sort.

At this time, though, on the issue of the retail sales tax the actions of this government in this bill speak for themselves. We see the government pursuing a regressive, right-wing tax agenda, one that does not create the fairness we all would like to see, and one I ask the Treasurer to seriously reconsider.

As a result, we in our party are going to have to vote against this tax increase, a tax increase that is not going to be to the benefit of the people of Ontario, a tax increase that is going to do considerable harm to people right across this province, particularly in lower income groups. We ask that this bill be withdrawn from passage in this Legislature.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Questions and Comments?

**Mr. Cousens:** I would like to know why my honourable friend and colleague from the New Democratic Party, whose charge and challenge it is to keep this government honest, starts bringing in federal politics. He has been elected by the people of Hamilton to come in here and do things for the people—

**Mr. Morin-Strom:** Sault Ste. Marie.

**Mr. Cousens:** Well, the member could come from Hamilton, he is such a handsome person.

The fact is he comes in here and starts bringing federal politics into a provincial issue. I am

surprised the Speaker did not put him out of order for bringing in those references. I would like to know just why the member could not concentrate all his remarks on the Ministry of Revenue and its failure to do the right things for the people of the province.

**Hon. Mr. Conway:** If I might be helpful to my friends in the opposition, the member for Sault Ste. Marie (Mr. Morin-Strom) was following the example of the members of the third party in the days and weeks running up to November 21.

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**Mr. Morin-Strom:** In response to the comments of the member for Markham (Mr. Cousens), I point out that our concerns are not just with where we are going with this province, but that the federal government may well have undue influence on where this province is going, because the right-wing agenda of the federal government is quite obviously becoming the right-wing agenda of the current provincial Liberal government. We want to see both of those agendas stopped in their tracks right now.

**Mr. Cousens:** I am pleased to have this opportunity to participate in this important debate, a debate that is very late in being scheduled in the Legislature. We are speaking on November 30, and if I am correct, the Treasurer had the pleasure of reading his budget on April 20. At that point the House was not sitting and he had to do it outside the House, and a bit of a scurry went on here.

The fact of the matter is that the people of Ontario have been paying this regressive tax for the last six and a half to seven months and this is the first opportunity the government has given this House to debate it in detail. We have had a chance to do something on the budget, but not on this bill. It seems like a simple bill, but it is not simple. The fact is it is a bill that is going to generate billions of dollars in Ontario.

I am going to cover a range of subjects that have to do with this bill. It seems so simple. All they are doing is saying it is one percentage point, from seven per cent to eight per cent. They go and give it a nice bill; it looks so clean that the taxpayers of Ontario just think, "Well, it is a given that the province is going to come along and do what it wants to do."

What we have here is An Act to amend the Retail Sales Tax Act. The key line is in section 2 where it says it is "further amended by striking out 'seven' in the third line and inserting in lieu thereof 'eight.'" That is all we are talking about.



But we are talking about an awful lot more than just that—why they are bringing in this tax, how they are spending the money and what is going to be done with the people of Ontario and for the people of Ontario because of the kinds of decisions that are being made by this government.

I have never before felt as angry at what the government has been doing. I have never felt as cynical as I feel now. It is almost as if the Liberals went into hiding here in Ontario during the time of the federal election. Since my friend the member for Sault Ste. Marie was talking about federal politics, the Ontario Liberals almost wanted to keep hidden and quiet, silent as little mice, the fact that they were going to be increasing taxes by one more point.

Why would we not be discussing this during the federal election campaign time period? Because then the people of Ontario would be reminded that Liberals tell you one thing when they are trying to get elected, and once they are there, they increase the taxes. That is exactly what those guys have done. Why did they not have the honour to stand up during the federal election campaign, some 50 days when we could have been debating this bill? It would have reminded all the people of Ontario that those guys are the thieves.

Interjections.

**Mr. Cousens:** I apologize, Mr. Speaker. I would not want in any way—

**Mr. Hampton:** Campaign from the left and govern from the right,

**Mr. Cousens:** I am not exactly sure what they are doing.

It was wrong for them to have been secretive during the period of the federal election campaign and then, as soon as the campaign was over, as soon as the recounts were done so they could not even influence that, to have brought into the House the Ontario retail sales tax.

**Mr. Faubert:** Note the member is smiling when he says it.

**Mr. Cousens:** I am not smiling. When you are in this place, you can almost go a little loony, and what they have been doing to the province of Ontario is enough to drive the people further into debt. That is what I am fighting. This very tax is punitive. It is something that is going to set the people of Ontario back \$1 billion, because what would have been in their pockets is now going to be in the government's pockets.

If the minister is brave enough and has a good enough answer, I would be delighted if he would

come forward in the House and answer in his remarks. Why did he not bring it for debate in this House six months ago? Why is it he waited until now? They control the agenda of this province and they control the agenda of this House, yet they deliberately postponed bringing it forward for us to debate and to consider, which is our just and due responsibility, but it is not done.

I think the people of Ontario are not only mad, angry and incensed at having to pay one per cent more, but as a representative of the people of Ontario, I am incensed to think the government would delay bringing forward this bill for debate until now. I have never had to wait as long to go after them. That is half the fun. They come along with the bill. Part of the secret is there is a psychology—

**Mr. Faubert:** The honourable member knows much better. It was to go to the 407.

**Mr. Cousens:** Mr. Faubert, you are not even in your seat and you are making interjections.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mr. Cousens:** If you are going to do that, you should be sitting over here where no one can see you.

**Mr. Hampton:** Go to your chair.

**Mr. Cousens:** Yes, go to your chair. Just go and sit there and have your water.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mr. Cousens:** Mr. Speaker, I suggest the honourable member is out of place to be making comments. As you know, according to the customs of this House, a member should be in his own seat. The fact is he did not lift his chair to over there.

**The Deputy Speaker:** That is right, and the member speaking should address his remarks through the Speaker.

**Mr. Cousens:** Mr. Speaker, I suggest to you that there is something being done here that you should not like. I do not like having this tax bill either, and this is something I would like to spend some few moments discussing.

Our party has tried to find out how the people of Ontario really feel about it. The fact is that when you increase the taxes, it hurts at the beginning. That is when people begin to say—

**Mr. Hampton:** It hurts everywhere.

**Mr. Cousens:** This one hurts everywhere because it just covers everybody. It is an indiscriminate tax-stealing effort by this government. What happens is that once you start paying it, you get kind of used to it. It is almost as if you are on some kind of medicine or on some kind of

morphine. You are doped up for a while. You get used to paying the tax. I will never get used to paying it.

That is the psychology of it all. The government introduces a tax like this at the very early stage when it has just been elected. They will not do it three years from now when they are getting ready to go to the people. I am not going to suggest they do it either, because I think the smart thing is to get the money for the next two or three years and then withdraw the tax. That would be progressive government, but that party does not have "progressive" in its name or in its thinking or in its being.

I would like to touch on this pamphlet our party has put together. There are thousands of people who now have this. The fact is we have reminded the people of Ontario—

**Mr. Ballinger:** Handed those out in the subway station, didn't you?

**Mr. Cousens:** Yes, I was handing these out in the subway station yesterday, as were many other members of our party.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order; one person at a time.

**Mr. Ballinger:** Whose picture is it?

**Mr. Cousens:** Quite candidly, I believe the people are not well served necessarily by what they get in the media. The media do an excellent job when it all comes about, and then they go to sleep and say: "Okay, what's the latest issue today?" It might be something that comes from the Minister of Energy (Mr. Wong), that he is having a fund-raising party; or it might be the Provincial Auditor today or it might be something else. They look for the headlines. This is a headline that will not go away.

**Mr. Hampton:** It's a headache, you mean.

**Mr. Cousens:** Hey, I really like this member. Not only is it a headline, it is a headache. I am getting very excellent help from my honourable friend the member for Rainy River. I just hope that when he has a chance to speak he will touch on some of the salient points of this act.

Part of what we are saying is that "the government which governs best is the government that reaches out to the greatest number of people." That is a quote from the Liberal throne speech of April 28, 1987.

On April 20 of this year, the Premier (Mr. Peterson) reached out and into our pockets. I would like to share this brochure with the people who were not lucky enough to be at one of the subway stops in Toronto to pick up a copy:

"David Peterson's 1988 budget is the biggest single tax grab in the history of our province—taking \$1.3 billion in new taxes out of your pocket!"

"Here's the bill David Peterson handed to you on April 20.

"Retail sales tax up!

"Gasoline taxes up!

"Provincial income tax up!

"Tax on alcohol up!

"Tax on tobacco up!

"In fact, during the last four years, you have paid an additional \$20 billion in taxes to David Peterson."

### 1530

That is really what we are going to talk about this afternoon and for as long as this bill is in this House for consideration. The fact of the matter is that one of the biggest tax grabs that this province has ever seen is in this budget. It is regressive, bad and ill-timed. There are many aspects to this bill that I would like to just begin to touch on.

When we start talking about good government, we really have to understand how the government uses the money that is collected through its taxes. If I had a sense that the money were being invested wisely, paying down the deficit and touching upon the services this government received a mandate to do something about on September 10, 1987, then I think many of us would have a feeling that the right things were being done.

But the fact of the matter is that we are dealing with a province that very fortunately is having a buoyant economy. We have virtually no unemployment by virtue of the unemployment rate in Toronto and some of the major centres. Certainly it is not that way in eastern Ontario or northern Ontario. There are pockets within our province that are suffering and need help.

The fact of the matter is that here is a government that is getting more and more money. What are they doing with it? What we are really talking about is the financial requirements that are currently projected at \$482 million, up \$9 million relative to their budget plan. What we are seeing, then, is the whole fact that the government is spending more and more money.

I guess what we are really saying is that when we have passed all the bills that come out of this budget, next year the government is going to do more of the same, because its spending habits have just not changed at all. We have a group of spendthrifts here who call themselves the government. All they can do is just keep on filling the pockets of more civil servants instead of meeting



the needs of the people who elected them to serve us.

Let's just touch on some of the problems that go into revenue and the whole status of the financial state of Ontario. When we start comparing 1988-89 to the previous year, I think members should note that the total provincial tax revenues will increase by 14.9 per cent, largely because of a projected 23.8 per cent, or \$1.5 million, increase in the retail sales tax. This bill alone will generate that kind of money. What we will then have is tax revenues that are up by a staggering 72.2 per cent as the government collects \$10.8 billion more in tax revenues this year than were collected in 1984-85.

That was just a few years ago. But that is probably the reason this government made a deliberate decision not to bring this bill up during the federal election campaign and remind the people of Ontario that if they elected a Liberal, they would say one thing and then tax the life right out of you. That is what has happened since 1984-85: a staggering 72.2 per cent increase in what the government has taken from the people of Ontario since that time. To repeat the number, we are talking about \$10.8 billion more in tax revenues this year over 1984-85. That is a lot of money.

If I were satisfied that that money was being spent on important things, then I would feel a lot better. But it is being spent on the wrong things. Revenue inflows—

**Mr. Furlong:** Education.

**Mr. Cousens:** I am going to come to education. I am glad the member raised that, because I have an important series of letters I have received from our own York Region Board of Education which show that we are not getting a fair shake from this government on education costs.

Revenue inflows from all major tax sources have increased dramatically over this four-year period. Proceeds from personal income tax have jumped by 69.9 per cent. Retail sales tax revenues have increased by 76.5 per cent. Since it assumed office, the Liberal government has enjoyed revenue windfalls of \$390 million in 1985-86, \$1.275 billion in 1986-87 and \$327 million in 1987-88, for a total windfall—unexpected gifts from the success and buoyant economy of this province—of almost \$2 billion, \$1.9 billion.

I see this government as one that has one great thing going for it: public relations. On the one side, they know how to swing it out there so that people think, "Aren't they doing a fine job?"

Unfortunately, most of the nine million people in Ontario have forgotten that they are now paying eight cents on the dollar rather than seven cents. Maybe they have given up. Maybe the people of the province have just given up and said, "Well, hey, they are going to do it to us anyway," so they take their wallets out and just pay it. But it has an impact, and I will share that with members in a moment so that they will have a better insight as to what that impact is.

If we look at a typical taxpayer—and I do not think there is a typical taxpayer in Ontario. I think right now we are all out of the box when it comes to paying taxes. We are all paying far more than we should, and the villains are sitting right across from me, except that I wish we had the Treasurer here.

**Mr. Ballinger:** You just got up and asked where Highway 407 was. How are we going to pay for 407?

**Mr. Cousens:** If we do not get Highway 407—and the member is not in favour of Highway 407—then I think there is the person who should begin to understand where the priorities are for this region.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mr. Cousens:** He comes along and has all the growth, he gets all the people up there and the member for Durham-York (Mr. Ballinger) thinks it is not important. I happen to think that if we are going to be building new communities and having new people establishing themselves in the greater Metro area, then we should also provide the services for them. That is not inconsistent with anything I have ever said.

**Mr. Ballinger:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I did not say to the honourable member that I did not care. I said if he is talking about raising taxes on one end and then speaking about money for Highway 407, he cannot have it both ways.

**The Deputy Speaker:** That is not a point of order. The member for Markham may proceed.

**Mr. Cousens:** I can see why you have a very difficult job, Mr. Speaker. It is the kind of innuendo that we deal with in this place. The fact of the matter is that I will fight for Highway 407. I will fight for the services these people deserve.

**Mr. Ballinger:** We have to raise the taxes to pay for it.

**Mr. Cousens:** I really have to take exception to what the member for Durham-York is saying. If we are going to have new communities being built, we are going to need new schools, new roads and new services. This government has to

remember that it does not just happen; we have to plan for it. One of the reasons we are having problems up in that area is that there has not been the planning coincident with the growth. We have to have the two working together.

Right now we are strangulating with the traffic problems we have on the highways, because the dollars are not being put out there for those highways—Highway 7, Highway 408, Highway 404. Why did the government delay Highway 404? The member for Durham-York does not seem to care about it. I do care and I am going to continue to fight for it.

When we start looking at Bill 122, a taxpayer with a spouse and two children who is earning \$40,000 a year will pay an additional \$126 a year in retail sales taxes. If the couple smokes, drinks, has a case of beer a week and drives an average amount, they will be paying an additional \$250 in taxes. A two-income family of four who own their own home, with one spouse earning \$35,000 and the other \$18,000, will pay an additional \$59 this year in provincial income tax and an additional \$153 in retail sales tax. Everybody is hit by these taxes.

Couples looking to buy a new home will no doubt be thrilled to learn that, as a result of the budget, the cost of a new house in the Metropolitan Toronto area can be expected to increase by between \$1,000 and \$2,000 because of sales taxes now being levied on the goods that go into that house. When they buy a home and they want to furnish it, they can look forward to paying an additional \$150 in sales tax on the \$15,000 they are spending on furniture, appliances and fixtures.

It is a hidden tax grab that is not so hidden; you just get used to it. It is there; you know you have to pay it. You are going to buy your home, you are going to buy your furniture, but this is a government that has done it to the people of Ontario. In the current fiscal year, tax and revenue measures in the 1985-86 and 1988-89 Liberal budgets will take \$1 billion out of the pockets of Ontario investors and consumers.

1540

That is why I am upset. I am upset because, although things are going well right now, if they were using that money and getting rid of the deficit and doing some of the proper building of an infrastructure—

**Mr. Ballinger:** They puff and blow at the same time. You can't puff and blow.

**Mr. Cousens:** —which the member for Durham-York seems to be criticizing, and getting the roads and getting the services, then

we would begin to think we were getting value for our dollar. The fact of the matter is that we are not.

I want to just touch on something, and it has to do with what the Premier had to say in his ad that appeared in all the major papers in Ontario during the summer of 1987. Here is what it begins with. It says: "We have done what we said we would do. Under the strong leadership of Premier David Peterson, the Liberal government of Ontario has achieved a solid record of success."

I wish we had our town crier from Markham here. He could really shout it from the rooftops. The good thing about it is that no one would hear it, and the other thing is that no one would believe it, especially when they start seeing what they are doing to us here.

This ad has three columns: "We said. We did. We will." When it comes down to what they have described, at least what the Premier and the Liberal government did, they do not say anything about taxes. They make all kinds of assurances on free trade and, "We will do something on free trade." The New Democratic Party is not too thrilled with the Premier's performance on free trade, and I am just delighted that he did not succeed in what he was trying to do, because I think it was wrong.

**Mr. Hampton:** You are giving too much credit, Don.

**Mr. Cousens:** I am giving him credit that he deserves. He certainly failed to do what he said he would do when it came to free trade.

On health care, he said he was going to increase funding to provide 4,000 new chronic and acute care hospital beds. I tell you, ladies and gentlemen of Ontario, I am seeing beds close down in Wellesley Hospital; I am seeing beds not opened in other hospitals; I am seeing problems right across Ontario with health care, and yet he was making all kinds of commitments back in August 1987.

Interjections.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mr. Cousens:** On education, he says, "We will significantly reduce class size, to one teacher for every 20 children in the early school years." Hey, it is great to say that when it comes from the government, but the fact of the matter is that there has been no money for the school boards to achieve that.

On the environment, he talks about what we will do to double the number of environment enforcement officers. I wonder if that has been done? "We will double the funding for beach



cleanup." I suppose the fact is that maybe there has been something happening there, but you begin to wonder what they are doing in long-term sewage programs. I mean, these were promises.

The one where this government fails totally is the failure to fulfil this promise to complete 102,000 affordable rental units by 1989. What part of 1989? We are just a month and a bit away from the New Year, and we are not going to see it by January 1. If they are going to have 102,000 affordable units, are we going to see them by the end of 1989? I venture to say, not a chance.

Then he goes on to make some promises about seniors. The first thing he did was get rid of Mr. Van Horne, who was beginning to do something about it, but certainly there has been no money spent and no drawing together of a program to protect and develop our seniors' programs.

Jobs? "We will give people over 45 up to \$5,000 for retraining." I will tell members what they have done with jobs. They have just closed down the innovation centres, and those were just classic places where we were beginning to see the generation and creation of jobs.

Day care— Well, the point is, here is an advertisement that was placed in papers across Ontario by the present Premier of this province saying what they were going to do. I just wish it had the courage to say in that, "We're going to put a tax on the people of Ontario like they have never seen before," because that is what the government has done and that is what this Minister of Revenue is having to do. He is the Zacchaeus of the government. He is the tax collector who is coming out and is taking this away from the people of our province.

**Mr. R. F. Johnston:** What are these obscure biblical references all about?

**Mr. Cousens:** I was doing a little bit of research on it, and when you start understanding where these retail sales taxes started, they did start back as far as 300 BC with Ptolemy.

**Hon. Mr. Grandmaitre:** That was 1961.

**Mr. Cousens:** Ptolemy. I am talking before Christ, and that is even before you had some kind of—

**Mr. Ballinger:** The year Don was born. BC: before Cousens.

Interjections

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Cousens:** The fact of the matter is that it has been happening ever since, but I will come back and show members how Ontario compares to the other provinces.

When we get the bulletins from the province, and these are circulated to retailers and people who are interested in knowing just how to collect the tax and what we are to do with it—and I reiterate that here we are talking about increasing the tax of Ontario from seven per cent to eight per cent, and you think that is just one cent in a dollar; it amounts to a 15 per cent increase.

No wonder inflation is starting to get fuelled again in the province. This government is again helping that whole problem of forcing things to cost more, and it has to have some impact on inflation. This budget is certainly an inflationary budget.

What we have are the budget highlights that come out of the Ministry of Revenue. I wish the minister would change his brochures on this and call them budget lowlights, because what he is really talking about—

**Mr. R. F. Johnston:** But they're blue.

**Mr. Cousens:** Well, they have not changed the blue. Everything else is red around here, and so are people's pocketbooks. There is more red ink there than there is black ink. You just have to talk to the people of Ontario. Most people are one or two paycheques away from bankruptcy anyway, and this province just puts them closer and closer to the edge of that very problem.

This tax increase on Ontario retail sales tax affects just about everything: goods, rentals, repairs, telephone service. People do not realize it. You just pay the telephone bill or for your cable TV. That is also being covered by the retail sales tax.

Sheet metal manufacturers, telecommunications services, advertising supplements and advertising inserts—again, that costs your retailer all that much more to advertise and to do what he is doing.

Ready-mix and asphalt producers—now that is a hurtful one when you start wanting more roads in Ontario and all you are doing is just saying, "Hey, we are going to just tax it and tax it." You are taxing the taxpayers' money when you start doing that one.

Relief for contractors—you go on and you get all the details.

One of the problems I have is the worry for the poor retailers who have to collect this. They do not have an easy time. They have their tables, and the ministry is right down their throat if they do not get the money in there right on time. I found this minister to be somewhat fair in helping resolve some of the problems I have had with my constituents in that matter, and it has only been his goodwill that has come along and broken



through. But I will tell him, it is a good thing no one knows what he is doing or they probably would not let him carry on trying to be the good guy that he wants to be some of the time.

As we are concerned with this tax grab, it becomes a matter that the people of Ontario should stop and think about. Unfortunately, we are here to do their thinking for them, and that is not what you would call the best of opportunities for the people of Ontario, because most of them have forgotten that they are now going to be paying this extra cent in sales tax.

But this massive tax grab allows this government to continue to increase its expenditures. They have already hit \$38.4 billion, up 8.6 per cent from the 1987-88 interim level. I just wish I knew what they are doing with all that money, because if it were doing good things, then I would have a sense of satisfaction. It is not.

Revenues? They continue to increase. Already they are increasing by 11 per cent, to \$37.9 billion.

This government does not really know what it is doing with the money. They are adding more civil servants. They are making—

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** Oh, come on.

**Mr. Faubert:** That's unfair.

**Mr. Cousens:** I will tell members one of the areas, and they are not civil servants: the staff around the ministers has never been larger with the number of people that they have there who back them up.

This is the largest tax grab in Ontario's history, and the fact is, why should they do it when everything else is so rosy and going so well? Why is it that this government should come along and say, "We're going to be greedy; we want more in order to proceed with our own agenda"?

1550

I really appreciated one of the statements that came out from our own member for Sarnia (Mr. Brandt), the interim leader of the Ontario Progressive Conservative Party. If I could, I would like to just put on the record what he said on April 20.

"The Liberal government has engineered the largest tax grab in Ontario's history," charges Andy Brandt, leader of the Ontario Progressive Conservative Party. Brandt says the tax hike is unwarranted. 'Without one tax increase, the government's total revenues for the next fiscal year would increase by 8.2 per cent.'"

In other words, they did not even have to raise the taxes and they were going to get 8.2 per cent more.

"Pointing out that the current inflation rate is 4.3 per cent, Mr. Brandt says, 'Surely any government should be able to live within a ceiling of increased spending that is almost double the rate of inflation.' Brandt also finds it ironic that the bulk of the tax grab relates to a one per cent increase in the retail sales tax.

"In 1973, Mr. Nixon, as leader of the Liberal Party, called any increase in the retail sales tax regressive and inflationary. In 1988, the same person now calls this increase democratic and upfront. The question becomes, as Mr. Brandt so eloquently raised it, 'Which Nixon do you believe?'"

I think I have trouble believing in anyone who has got that kind of approach to running a government.

As we look down the road, the people of Ontario are the ones who are paying the shot. Unless we begin to understand that there is just no bottomless pit, this government should begin to accept responsibility for running the ship so that it does not have all kinds of extra people on it, all kinds of extra services, and is correctly doing the things it should. It is in that direction that I would like to come back and discuss what the Retail Sales Tax Act is all about and how it fits into the whole scheme of things.

The first Retail Sales Tax Act came into effect on September 1, 1961, when this tax was imposed on the purchaser of tangible personal property consumed or used within the province. While the form of taxation has remained unchanged, the rate of taxation and the retail sales tax base have undergone many changes in the past 27 years. You can go through the progression and, I guess, what you really see is that steady state where the province continues to take more and more from people who have less and less.

Originally, it was just on things that were sold. We are now seeing the tax applying to entertainment costs; more and more we are seeing it on railway rolling stock. The people of Ontario assume now that everything they buy and everything they get is going to be taxed.

There are taxes on telecommunication services, accommodation and labour charges. This sales tax applies to meals. Fortunately, last year the government said any meal or prepared food under \$4 is exempt. It is a huge pile of money that this government takes on taxes on beer and wine sold under the authority of the Liquor Control Board of Ontario. We are talking about taxes upon taxes and what you end up having is a huge bureaucracy that helps administer these taxes,



and anyone who is running a retail outlet and wants to know it would really have to understand regulations 903 and 904.

I really do not want to take the time to go through what those regulations are all about, but there is a tremendous amount of power in the ministry to administer these taxes, to collect them and to have a large bureaucracy to make sure that those moneys come in. There is a whole other process in regulation 904 where, through orders in council, there are different kinds of ways in which the government can become involved in getting certain exemptions or going after certain people for their money.

Look at what the Ministry of Revenue has become. People outside of this building would find it hard to believe that in 1893, when this building was constructed, all the offices and administration for the province were housed in this one building, and now we are the greatest and largest landlord in downtown Metropolitan Toronto. This houses, largely, the people who are working for the Minister of Revenue (Mr. Grandmaître) and who are out there collecting the money from the people of this province.

There is a huge ministry there. As I look at the organization charts, the retail sales tax branch is a huge part of that ministry. I guess the people of the province just have to understand that it is a costly exercise to run government, but it is more costly when you have a Liberal government than if you have a Tory government.

I was looking for my notes on The Retail Sales Tax in Canada—I was doing some research on it—a book that was written by a man by the name of A. J. Robinson. That is Canadian Tax Paper 77, which comes out of the Canadian Tax Foundation. I found his background very insightful and helpful in understanding how we got into this provincial retail sales tax. So few people have stopped, as I had not until I realized that I had an opportunity today, to get into the subject in greater detail as to just how much has gone on that leads us to this.

In his historical perspective, he begins with this statement, "The retail sales tax is a recent addition to the battery of revenue sources of the Canadian public sector." He gives two main reasons for the introduction of the retail sales tax.

The first, of course, has always been the threat of expenditures rising to exceed revenues. This is a government that really knows how to exceed revenues. Their expenditures exceed them and will continue to exceed them, because there is no commitment to live within their budget guidelines, no commitment at all. Also, rather than

cutting expenditures, they keep on finding new sources of revenue. That is what this government is good at; finding another way of getting the money from the people of Ontario.

This was something that was maybe a temporary tax. We are quite aware that in some provinces in Canada, especially in 1917 when the war income tax became an interim levy, it was a way in which the government was able to get money in a time of emergency. I wonder what kind of emergency we are in now. It is purely one of poor fiscal planning on the part of the Premier, the Treasurer and all the 30 or so cabinet ministers. All they can do is think, "We're going to take and we're going to spend."

The provincial retail sales tax initially followed the second pattern, which was really that it would be something that would solve that problem and then it would be abolished. This was the case in Alberta. Maybe this would be the best news that the Minister of Revenue could give us, that he put a window on this tax, that he started it on May 2 and he will abolish it on December 25 or January 1 as a present for the people of Ontario. Put a deadline on it; bring it to an end.

What happened in the past with a retail sales tax act is it was not always something that would go on for ever and ever. The tax that I am talking about in Alberta was introduced in 1936 and was abolished on August 4, 1937. The fact is this could have an end to it if the government decided it did. The retail sales tax is something that could be abolished.

**Hon. Mr. Conway:** Remember how it was abolished and why.

**Mr. Cousens:** That is right. It was a change of government. I am glad my honourable, good friend raises that. This government will have to campaign in the next election as one that raised taxes as soon as it took power, in spite of all the promises, which I went gone through earlier, where it had all the good things and there was no reference there of increasing the taxes. The fact is the people of Ontario are going to remember and I am going to remind them. I think that is true, too. I intend to remind them every chance I get. In fact, tonight I have my riding association's annual meeting. I will be telling them again how this government has put its hand into our pockets and taken the money away.

In the past, the retail sales tax has been an emergency tax and the emergency here is that this government does not know how to control its spending habits. It does not know how to establish priorities. It keeps on adding more and more servants to the bureaucracy, but it is not

able to do it within some sense of fiscal restraint, some sense of rationalization that says, "We are going to be fiscally responsible."

**1600**

I am looking at Robinson's comments in the retail sales tax in Canada. He points out how in British Columbia, New Brunswick and Newfoundland in the late 1940s they began to introduce the retail sales tax, but no longer was this thought of at that time as a tax of last resort. It was seen as an attractive tax and it was related more to the expanding horizons that could begin to help the province provide certain services.

Why is it that the one province that was able to resist for so long was Alberta? The fact of the matter is, now we are all into it and we all have to pay these taxes. It becomes a big dollar. Ontario is at eight per cent. If you look around the country, every province seems to be in it, but Manitoba is at six per cent. Why is that?

**Mr. Ballinger:** Where is Quebec?

**Mr. Cousens:** Quebec is at nine per cent. Saskatchewan is at five per cent. I guess what you really have to look at are the total revenues that come in as a percentage of revenue. Let me just share that one with the honourable minister. He probably does not have all of these figures at his disposal the way I do, because I have been researching this. He is just sitting back there, driving around in his limousine with the member for Scarborough-Ellesmere (Mr. Faubert) sitting beside him and telling him where to go.

The retail sales tax in Canada has been analysed by the different provinces and in 1985—this is the last year in which these figures have been accumulated—we see that Ontario has collected more revenue from the retail sales tax, as a percentage, than any other province. Now, there is a statistic. In other words, this province is going out for the money more than any other province. The numbers are right there. I will send this over to the minister following my presentation.

Newfoundland comes closest to it, with 16.3 per cent of its total revenues coming from the retail sales tax. Prince Edward Island gets 11.7 per cent, but in 1985, Ontario—that is the one I am talking about—collected 16.5 per cent of its total revenue through the retail sales tax, and that is the highest of any province in Canada. We were the highest then, and by increasing the sales tax on May 2 to eight per cent, that makes us even higher.

I am saying it has gone out of control. I liked what Donald Creighton said when he talked about Canadian government assuming responsi-

bility for no more than the three accepted and traditional functions of government. If only we could go back to the traditional forms of government. People are expecting government to do everything for them. It is high time people did more for themselves, and high time we helped them help themselves. Instead, there is this philosophy here: "We're going to throw it out to them. We're going to do more and more." What we have to do is find a way in which we can have that balance, and this government does not have that balance.

When Donald Creighton was writing about Canadian government, he said that, really, what you want to do is have "the three accepted and traditional functions of government; namely, the administration of justice, the support of civil government and the provision of defence, plus expenditures intended to reduce consumer costs and increase labour productivity, which in Canada at the time meant transportation."

If we saw the money going into transportation, into services and into schools in the way in which it should—and I am going to come to that, because I have a section of my presentation in which I am going to be touching on the failure of this government to finance education in a sound and realistic way. The fact of the matter is this government is all over the map. It just goes and spreads a bit here and a bit there. Yet when it comes to the real important things, it has a marvellous way of closing one eye.

What we are talking about here is a system of taxation that is putting a burden on everyone. What we have to do is find ways of taking that burden off the people of Ontario. We are one of the most heavily taxed jurisdictions in the country. I do not know how we compare with the United States. I hear different figures, but I am given to believe that on a per capita basis we are taxed more. It is hard to work out an equation that says how we compare to Michigan, a neighbouring state, or New York, but the fact is we have to find ways of relieving the people who are making the economy go, who are concerned about going out in the morning and working during the day. We cannot just take so much out of their pockets by taxation that we discourage them from wanting to be free-enterprisers, that we remove that expectation and goal that when they are finished working they are going to have something left over for themselves.

Why doesn't the government, if it is going to be responsible in coming forward with more taxes, do something to relieve the burden of property taxes on seniors? I am concerned about



the way seniors are having to carry the load. They continue to carry the load in this province. They have given of themselves. They have worked. They have generated wealth. Now, when their pensions are not indexed and they are on a fixed income, they are continuing to pay education taxes. They are continuing to pay this tax. We continue to tax them on their properties.

I thought yesterday that one of the best questions I have heard asked in the House was asked by my friend the member for Simcoe West (Mr. McCague) when he was saying that the government just sent back the property tax credit to the people of Ontario—a cheque for \$50. Why did the government not increase that by 15 per cent because of the money it took from them with the Ontario retail sales tax?

There had to be some way in which you would have a quid pro quo. The government comes along with a great big public relations scam to say to the seniors, “Here is your \$50,” which is a program that our government introduced back several years ago. But I am glad the government continued it. It cancelled so many of the other programs that we had, like the innovation centres, the enterprise centres, the computer-aided design/computer-aided manufacturing centres and businesses that were going to help build and grow—the engine for Ontario. Yet this government comes along and continues to tax its seniors very, very highly.

Let’s do something to take the burden off the property holder. What about having some fair and proper grants for local governments and regional governments? I am looking forward to the day in which we come along in this House and see the announcement of the transfer payments. But the likelihood of those transfer payments keeping pace with inflation, keeping pace with growth, keeping pace with the needs of those people is such—

**Mr. Faubert:** Keeping pace with diminishment by the federal government.

**Mr. Cousens:** I will tell the member this much: this province is failing to do what it should be doing in the fast-growing areas. As one who comes from the greater Metropolitan Toronto area, there has to be a balancing act. A per capita comparison, when it is made, begins to prove that this province is not showing that kind of equity.

This government should also do other things. If we saw the gasoline tax that the government collects go back into roads and into services for commuters, then I think we would have one of the best road systems you would ever see. But

where does it go? It goes into the coffers of this government, hidden for ever. It certainly does not come out in the form of asphalt and cement.

**Mr. Haggerty:** Highway 407 is not on the list.

**Mr. Cousens:** This government has to proceed with 407. At the rate it is doing it, it is going to be 25 years before we have that highway.

**Mr. Haggerty:** How about a toll on the superhighways?

**Mr. Cousens:** And who wonders? Would that be a way of working? Is that a recommendation the government is going to present? My honourable friend the member for Niagara South (Mr. Haggerty), may have the agenda of the government. I am now given a sight. The member for Niagara South has just said that maybe the government should have some kind of toll on the highways. If that is really the suggesting he is making, I would like to see that come forward. That will give us another debate in this House. I can guarantee it.

The fact is that we are not getting the services. The member for Niagara South, who has been here far longer than I have, knows that things are not getting any better.

I see the whole problem where we have taxes upon taxes. Who ends up carrying them? This tax, especially, is carried by low-income families. They are the ones who have to carry the weight. Rather than give them a break, what this government did was just come along and say: “We have a surprise for you. You elect us and we will do all the things we are saying we will do.” By the way, they are not doing too many of them. The other thing they will do is levy a tax.

Regarding the retail sales tax, I am quoting from *The Retail Sales Tax in Canada*, by A. J. Robinson. I would like to quote from him when talks about services. He says:

“The retail sales tax is essentially a tax on expenditures by consumers to satisfy household wants, and household wants may be satisfied by the purchase of services as well as by the purchase of tangible property.

“Consumers purchase not only an appliance, but also the services of installing it, maintaining it, repairing it and finally, disposing of it.”

**1610**

I guess the fact is that the government has us coming and going. It has us when we are paid, from our paycheques, and then it goes and takes some of that cheque we have worked hard for when we go and spend it on anything except food and certain clothes for children, and we are taxed.

I think that when people came to this country in the first place, they came with the expectation that there was going to be an opportunity to build a nation that would begin to offer new advantages and new opportunity. Instead of having that, all they have to do is turn around and realize that we have a government now that is more interested in adding to its coffers than it is in providing those services.

I have a few notes I would like to refer to from some of the people who have commented on this tax grab. Mary Gooderham of the *Globe and Mail* made a comment on November 30. She said: "None of the six pieces of legislation required to bring in the \$1.3 billion in tax increases has been passed yet"—I wonder why that is?—"even though the measures—including a one percentage point increase in the provincial sales tax—have been in effect since the spring budget."

I have said it before, but I have to review: Was the government trying to hide it? Was the government just trying to sort of skate past it? Did the government hope that it would not have to come into the House and listen to the opposition on the consequences of this tax?

I am concerned, as Mary Gooderham also says, that: "The Tories complain that the extra money is being used to expand an already bloated civil service and to increase the size of ministerial office staff, and they have vowed to try to stall the legislation." If we can stall the legislation, I will tell you, Mr. Speaker, we will.

"Roll back the taxes, Bob." The Bob I am talking about is our Treasurer and Minister of Economics. This was Garth Turner in his days when he was not a federal member of Parliament and when he was able to see this far more objectively as a person sitting down there looking at what was going on.

He says there are now almost 90,000 provincial employees, which is an increase of about 7,000 people since the government came to power. There is where the money goes, or a good part of it. Not all of it, because large parts of it go to just the irresponsible spending, window-dressing and advertising. This Provincial Auditor's report will tell us—

**Mr. Ballinger:** Ten years ago you had 90,000.

**Mr. Cousens:** Wrong, absolutely wrong.

**Mr. Ballinger:** Not wrong, not wrong at all.

**Mr. Cousens:** In fact, during the years from 1981 to 1985, I was present when I saw what the Conservative government of that time did to trim the civil service down by 4,000 employees. It

was a tremendous effort of this government to control costs and control spending, and people were not let go. Yet this group has come along and added to the numbers of the civil service rolls and will continue to add to them, because that is its way of solving the problems.

A few people, before the sales tax came in, said, "You know, it might happen." It was not something that people speculated about when we saw an election coming in the summer of 1987. No. At that point, all they could think about were the halcyon, good days of what a Liberal government would do for Ontario. They did not think about what a Liberal government would do to Ontarians by setting this tax and ripping them off.

Stephen Brunt of the *Globe and Mail* says, "A retail sales tax increase would have a direct effect on the consumer price index and could prove to be an inflationary flash-point." I am sure he is right at that, because when you realize that so much is affected by the cost added to anything you are buying with the retail sales tax, that is in fact an inflationary effect.

This is something David Perry, the senior researcher at the Canadian Tax Foundation, commented on. He said, "It would indirectly influence wage and salary demands and increase business costs, thereby increasing the cost to consumers by more than the tax rise itself."

**Mr. Faubert:** That was last May and it hasn't happened.

**Mr. Cousens:** Oh, it does happen; it has happened. Mr. Speaker, do you see who is talking from someplace other than his own seat? I love to hear him, but I would rather hear him from down here, where I do not have to look at him. That is just the way the House is designed.

**Mr. Smith:** There are a few things we do agree with you on.

**Mr. Cousens:** I have a lot of support for the sarcastic comment I just made about my very good friend the member for Scarborough-Ellesmere. In spite of the fact that he is wrong in most of what he says, I am pleased that he is still very attendant. He attends the House, and I know he is a good assistant to the Minister of Revenue. I wish he would influence the Minister of Revenue to withdraw this bill and have some impact on the government to keep from increasing the taxes.

We had a tax increase like this in 1973, when it was increased from five per cent to seven per cent.

Interjections.



**The Acting Speaker (Mr. M. C. Ray):** The government members will be reminded that they get an opportunity to respond after the speaker has made his presentation.

**Mr. Cousens:** I think it is worth while going back to May 1973, when the increase was last made. I realize that was a Conservative government. It was not a happy day in the House, I am sure, for the Conservatives of the day to have to listen to the then critic for the Treasury, who happened to be the member for Brant-Haldimand (Mr. R. F. Nixon). I would like to quote from some of the things he said back in the Legislature on May 1, 1973, when the Conservative government of the day had to increase the tax from five per cent to seven per cent. Let's just see how relevant the remarks he made then are to what is going on here now. He said:

"When he set the May 1 deadline, it appeared that he was attempting to do what is very justifiable indeed: that is, to give the Legislature at least an opportunity to debate and vote against or perhaps even approve his tax measures before the people had to start digging into their pockets for that \$4 million a day which is associated with the sales tax."

How much does the Treasurer get a day now? That is my good friend the member for Brant-Haldimand talking at that time. He went on to say:

"The imposition of the tax was based on an argument that is very similar to the one put to us by this Treasurer—that in the face of intransigence at the federal level it is necessary for him, much against his will, to impose these substantially unpopular taxes."

In fact, this government has used the same old argument: "It's because of the federal transfers. They're not up to what they used to be, so we are therefore going to have to increase the revenues through a sales tax." That is the same argument the member was using at the time. He said:

"I thought this sidelight to history showed that things have not changed too much over the progress of years. It doesn't seem to matter whether there is a Conservative or a Liberal government in Ottawa—the Treasurer of Ontario always has trouble getting along with them."

I have seen that from the remarks that are made by my honourable friends in this House who are members of other parties and not of the Progressive Conservative Party. The member goes on to say on that day of May 1, 1973—the issue really was the sales tax issue—then he says:

"We have heard the argument about regressivity and I look forward to hearing the Treasurer

compensate for the criticisms that have been levelled at the tax because of its terribly regressive nature.... Not being an economist..."

Hey, isn't that something? I would like to say to the ladies and gentlemen of Ontario and the honourable Speaker of the House that the man who is now the Treasurer of Ontario and Minister of Economics begins this paragraph by saying, "Not being an economist..."

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**Mr. Faubert:** That is why he is a good Treasurer.

**Mr. Cousens:** I tell you, we are in bad shape.

Anyway, that is the way he began. There he is. He is not an economist, and now he is the Minister of Economics for the province. That shows what we have done to ourselves. Who does not like the Treasurer? If you do not like the Treasurer—what I like especially is what he said on that day, May 1, 1973. First of all, he says:

"Not being an economist, I would say it is the kind of cost-push inflation which simply means that the citizens of this province, whatever their income happens to be, are going to pay a minimum of two per cent more on their regular cost of living. This simply means that the inflationary pressures are going to be extreme."

Obviously, the inflationary pressures with his one per cent are not as extreme as the two per cent, but they are extreme, because we are living in an age in which we have gone through inflation. We have seen the price of inflation, we know what it does to jobs, we know what it does to the economy. This tax that the government is bringing out now, this one per cent on the retail sales tax, is inflationary. It is a 15 per cent surcharge on everything we go to buy, an increase over what we had before. Increasing it from seven to eight per cent is a 15 per cent increase.

I would also like to read further from the member for Brant-Haldimand, who is presently the Minister of Economics and who said, "Not being an economist..." He says, "I sense that the inflationary pressures from this tax increase are going to be considerable."

I wish he were here, because that is the message that our party is trying to pass on to the honourable minister and to the Minister of Revenue, who, with his parliamentary assistant and with a few other members around, is the representative of the Premier in the House at this time. Unfortunately, there are no other ministers here except for himself. The fact of the matter is that it is inflationary; it is adding to the cost of doing business in Ontario.

I would like to read further from some of the remarks that were made on that fateful day of May 1, 1973, when the present Minister of Economics was talking.

**Mr. Faubert:** He's the Treasurer.

**Mr. Cousens:** He is that, along with the Minister of Revenue.

"I simply put it to the Treasurer that by his decision to make the sales tax, as I have said, the queen of the revenue producers, he has set loose a pressure on the economy of this province and this nation which is going to have ramifications much more far-reaching than apparently he understands or presently envisages."

I wonder if he has ever read his own words. Mr. Speaker, would you do me a favour next time you talk to the Treasurer when you are in caucus—because you go to caucus and the regular Speaker does not—and ask him whether he has ever had a chance to go back and look at the words that he said back in the early 1970s and whether he still believes what he said then?

He goes on to say: "I would like to say something further. It is my contention and the contention of our party and others in the NPD"—I do not know what that is; is that what they called the New Democratic Party in those days?—"put forward most notably by the member for York South, that the tax, in fact, is unnecessary."

That is the point. If the Liberals ran a good government, if they went and trimmed some of the fat off the government, if they went and did not hire the number of servants that they now have to serve them and their cabinet members and the staff and the Premier's office and did not waste the money that the auditor talked about, then they would not need to increase the taxes of the people of Ontario in this way or in any way. I go on to read from the member, who was the member for Brant in those days, again. He really went on and on. He is speaking here of the Treasurer. He says:

"Surely if the Treasurer had followed his political instincts, if not his personal instincts, and left things well enough alone; if he could, in fact, Mr. Speaker, have made some readjustment to show that a new hand was at the wheel, he would have found himself in the same position that certain reeves are now finding themselves in their own budgetary situation."

There is no one who is responsible for a budget who does not know that you have to be able to say: "No, there isn't any money to spend on that program. We're going to have to be more careful and more prudent." There is not a business person who did not learn that lesson in the

recession of the early 1980s, and yet this government has forgotten that lesson. It has come along and said: "No, we can solve any problem we've got with money." In order to get that money, they go back and increase the taxes of each one of us. Fortunately, he is a cabinet minister and making a lot more money, so he does not feel the pinch the way people who are living on marginal incomes or seniors or students who do not have that kind of money do.

I would like to read further from the same speech by the then critic for Treasury and Economics, who is now the minister for that portfolio. At that time, he was the Liberal sitting over in the general direction that I am. Now he is the Treasurer who is responsible for the budget. As he was talking about the then Treasurer, he said:

"He would have found that revenues from the present base, even though there had been some judicious adjustment without the large increases in tax, would have been sufficient to pay for the large share of the cost of our governmental programs, and that his deficit position would have been far less than that which the figures he gives us at the present time would indicate."

That is what we are trying to tell the Treasurer. In fact, we would not have to be making this speech if in fact the Minister of Revenue and the Treasurer and Minister of Economics, who says he is not an economist, would sit down and read some of the Treasurer's old speeches. Anyway, I get thrilled by what Treasurer had to say about the way that budget was going.

I go on. He had a question on May 3, 1973, about the increase in the Ontario retail sales tax. He said:

"I have a question of the Treasurer, Mr. Speaker.

"Does he agree with the legal opinion expressed in the last two days that the \$2 million that has come in to the consolidated revenue fund as a result of the two per cent increase in sales tax has been collected illegally, and that the residents of Ontario have no legal requirements to pay this additional two per cent?"

That probably pertains to the same problem I have. Since May 2, people in Ontario have been paying an extra one per cent.

I get a thrill out of my friend the member for Durham-York. He comes and goes, but I hope he will come back for more, because I would like to just have a few more comments. I know he cannot comment, because he is out of his chair.

One of the concerns that I have is, how legal has this tax been for the last six and half or seven



months? Why did the government not bring forward legislation earlier so we could debate it? Why did it not sort of allow the due process? Instead: "Levy the tax. We know we've got the majority. We've got the 94 seats. We'll jam that through the House and we'll take the money one way or the other."

The fact is that it is legal. He was asking the question and he should have known better in 1973 that the government has the power to come along and do what it wants when it wants, especially when it has such a huge majority.

He went on and he had another question, on May 4. He was really up and down out of his seat in those days, concerned about the retail sales tax increase. That was the member for Brant-Haldimand at his best. Mind you, he was 15 years younger than he is today. He had a question for the Honourable Mr. White. He said:

"I have a further question of the Treasurer. Since the House rose yesterday, has he had any further legal advice as to the status of the citizens of the province who would agree with the strongly held contention that the increase in the sales tax is so far not their responsibility to pay and may not be their responsibility to pay? What is their legal status if they continue to refuse to pay this tax?"

I would not counsel anyone not to pay a sales tax in this province. They have such a bureaucracy that goes out there. Even if a retailer fails to collect the tax on time, they come in with machine guns blasting and ready to knock him right off, saying, "Look, you've got to pay and you pay this quickly." They have put people out of business in this province if they are just short of time and the moneys just are not flowing as quickly as the province wants them to.

There was the member for Brant-Haldimand pressing on the minister of the day, saying: "Well, come on now. Is it legal for you to come along and levy this tax without having it duly passed in the Legislature?" What we are seeing now is that instead of just having it a few weeks before it was passed in the Legislature, we are talking about months of delay from this government.

On May 8, the now honourable Treasurer was out of his chair again—

**Hon. Mr. Grandmaître:** At least he wasn't out of his mind.

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**Mr. Cousens:** I would never even think such a terrible thought of the minister. I think it is the lack of things in that part of him that concerns me, and the inconsistency. He is a man whom we

all respect and admire, but we dislike the way he is increasing the taxes for the people of Ontario.

He and I would have that as a major bone of contention, and that is why we are going to be here debating this for a little longer. Maybe there is a chance that the honourable minister will go back to the Premier and to his government colleagues and say: "Look, I think we've finally seen the light. We are going to put an end to this regressive tax, this inflationary tax, and we are going to do something for the people of Ontario, not something to them," which is what this tax does.

I want to read further from the comments made by the then Treasury critic who is now our Treasurer. He said: "By which government policy,"—it is in the middle of a context—"I don't know whether you want to deal with the three subsections separately—but subsection (1) of section 2 is the iniquitous aspect of the bill before us, by which government policy would increase the sales tax from five per cent to seven per cent." "Iniquitous," is the word he used. I had not thought of that word, with my background. That is one that really starts to show that there is something sinful about it.

He goes on to say: "We...believe this to be an iniquitous tax, one that is not necessary in the present budgetary and fiscal stance of the province. It is a change in the tax of the province which is a serious fiscal error and, I would predict to you, Mr. Chairman, also is a political error."

I have to tell the House I have never agreed with the Treasurer more than I have while reading some of his old speeches when he was critic of Treasury and Economics. Now that he is sitting over there he has forgotten everything that he said in the good old days when he was in opposition. The only thing is I hear that he is probably not going to be around for the next election. There are rumours that he might accept some appointment, go somewhere or go back to the farm. I am not just sure. I know that whenever he leaves we will miss him, but we will not miss the legacy he has left us with: the whole series of extra taxes that we are concerned about today.

Then he goes on to say, "It is not my intention to discuss the principle of the tax, of course—and such would not be in order—other than to tell you, sir, that we intend to vote against either the section or the subsection, whichever way you want to put it, and that we also intend to divide the House in this connection."

For the people who are watching this on TV, "to divide the House" means that the bells are



going to be ringing, then the members will come in and there is going to be a vote. You could almost take that as another kind of division, the division of the rich and the poor, the separation of the haves and the have-nots. In those days he was prepared to have a division, to make sure that everyone who really wanted to push through that bill would stand in his place and show his intention of fighting for it by being in the Legislature to do so.

I just gave you notice, Mr. Speaker: There will be a division in this House on this bill by our party, to make sure that those Liberals who are standing across from us, who think that it is just something easy and fun to do, go down on the record as having voted for this increase from seven to eight per cent.

But the Treasurer goes on. I just cannot believe that it is the same member I meet today in the Legislature, whom we smile at and who is so gregarious and so much fun, but he was angry.

**Mr. Haggerty:** I have never seen Bob Nixon angry.

**Mr. Cousens:** He starts using words like "iniquitous" and he says the government at the time is "politically unwise." He really had so much to say on this that I do not know whether the House wants me to read in all of his remarks. I would just like to say that we could. I guess the best part of it was that when he closed off, he just really made it clear that he was going to vote against it.

"Before the Treasurer came into this House and while he was absent—" No, that is not totally relevant.

There was our friend the Treasurer back on May 8, 1973. On May 11, he had not changed his mind. He was still in there fighting for it. He begins by saying, "It has been improper and has been a tax imposed without legal effect by jurisdictions in Canada." He goes on to criticize this government for the way in which it went and levied that tax.

I do not know what I can do to stop this government from taking this tax money away from the people of Ontario. I do not know what I can do to get the government to change its mind and its spending habit so it could reduce the deficit and do the kinds of things people voted it in for. In fact, what I see happening here is a government that says: "We really don't care what the people of Ontario want. We're going to do our own thing." I guess that is the disadvantage for the people of Ontario in having such a huge majority. The government then has total freedom.

Kenneth Kidd in the *Toronto Star* made some comments. He said, "The hike in the Ontario sales tax will dampen consumer confidence and could hurt retail sales." He took that quote from the Retail Council of Canada.

We are living in a consumer-driven economy. It was not that long ago that I had a meeting with the president of American Express, which is really one of the largest financial institutions in North America and the world. We were talking about the potential problems of some kind of recession or a dip in the economy in the future. He was concerned that the election of a new President of the United States might cause some change in confidence, but he felt there was enough consumer confidence that that would not become a major concern.

Consumer confidence is a very fragile thing. It is not something that even economists or sociologists or anyone can perfectly define. It has to do with the ability people have to use their money for present and future expenditures, yet to save enough for a future emergency.

I know we are a country in which many people spend far more than they earn and that their debt load is high, not unlike the Liberal government here which is continuing to carry a deficit and should not, especially when times are good. But consumer confidence is something so sensitive that we want to make sure we continue to instil in the consumers of this province that we are running a province that has an environment and a climate in which everybody can prosper; that if there are people who are not going to prosper, we as a responsible group of legislators are going to provide the services and the care and deliver the kind of money to them that allows them to maintain a reasonable standard of living.

Consumer confidence is something you can measure by the activity that goes on in retail institutions and retail outlets during this month of December coming up, because if people feel good about themselves, they feel good about the future and are inclined to buy a little more during the month of December for sharing gifts, food and other things. It is also a time of celebrating life in itself, and they will take the chance of trying to pay it off in the first quarter or the first half of the following year.

Consumer confidence is a delicate thing. Why then does this government play around with it as it has by increasing the retail sales tax, which comes along and just adds that much more of a burden on to every citizen of this province? It is an indiscriminate tax because it touches every consumer. It is not selective in that it just affects



the rich. It touches the poor; it touches the seniors; it touches all people.

That becomes one of the concerns of the experts. Certainly when someone from the Retail Council of Canada would spend his time looking at the effect on the consumer and on the impact that any kind of retail sales tax would have, he would be concerned with this. He was concerned about it.

This is something else said by Gerald Doucet, who is special adviser to the Retail Council of Canada. He said: "I'm disturbed that it's the first sales tax increase in 15 years." I think that it is probably one of the hardest things for a government's past, to say, "Look, we will not bring down an additional burden on the retail sales tax." It is probably the easiest tax that the Treasurer has to bring in, because as I said earlier in my presentation, people forget that they are paying it after a while.

They have almost forgotten now that it was seven per cent before May 2 and that it is now eight per cent. They will just pay it. They know that there is nothing they can do about it. It is part of that weight of government on the shoulders of every one of us in Ontario. It is part of that load that we all have to carry, that exceedingly heavy weight of this massive, ever-growing government that continues to spend and throw money all over the place.

"In budget assumptions, the Ontario government is certainly banking on another strong year for retailers." I think that assumption is valid. Certainly as I see the economy now, it continues to be buoyant and we continue to look forward to the future with optimism. But what happens when the future is not as optimistic as it is right now? What happens when there is a recession or a dip?

I would be pleased if the minister could give us some assurance that he will remove this tax in the future, if things change.

**Mr. Haggerty:** They used to have a tax on automobiles.

**Mr. Cousens:** That is a possibility. I think there could be ways in which the government could give tax holidays. That might be a way that you have people involved, rather than, as we see with the auditor, having many people in this province escaping the proper payment of taxes. I would think that has to be a major concern to all of us.

If the Treasurer is the tax collector for the province and the Provincial Auditor is challenging his ability to collect taxes that are due, that becomes another problem. The fact that his

ministry is showing that it is not collecting all those taxes may be one of the reasons the Treasurer has to increase taxes, to make up for inefficiencies in other places. That is the bottom line that came out of the statement by the auditor today.

"Tax hikes called blow to the average guy." I think that is really why I would like to take some time, so that this government will understand just exactly the impact of its tax on the average person in Canada, and especially here in Ontario.

Tom Delaney, the economic spokesman for the Consumers' Association of Canada, says: "It is a regressive budget, and middle- and low-income earners are going to be crucified." "Crucified" is a very strong word to describe what I would call economic strangulation. It is called economic suicide. This whole business of balancing the budget and controlling finances is probably one of the major causes of marital breakdown and one of the greatest problems to households. The fact that this government just adds to the problems of these households is a further proof of its lack of caring and lack of concern for the needs of real people.

**Mr. Faubert:** What else can the government do?

**Mr. Cousens:** Maybe the government should go back to its constituency offices and hear what people are really suffering. Maybe it is so busy running this huge superministry, adding more people to do more work, that it is not understanding that there are people out there who are having to work hard to pay the bill of this government. It is the average person who is especially hurt. Those who are making their millions and billions in Ontario do not begin to see the consequences of this kind of suffering.

This is another statement by the Treasurer: "He refused to exempt school boards from the retail sales tax." Here you have groups within our province that are having to collect their money from the property tax owners, and then they have to come along and pay all the taxes as well. Really it is a double form of taxation. The school boards are spending taxes that they have got through property taxes of ratepayers, and then those very same school boards are taxed again by this level of government.

I like this title, and maybe members opposite can see it from all the way over here.

**Mr. Faubert:** What year was that?

**Mr. Cousens:** The member for Scarborough-Ellesmere is still not in his seat and is still talking out of place. It is a pleasure to see him, but I would rather not.



"We Have Been Nixed" is the title. That begins to describe what Mr. Nixon has done to the people of Ontario.

I could go on and on. There are many statements by people who have commented in a negative way about this sales tax. The fact of the matter is that they are all right.

I would like to comment on some of the things that come out of another statement in A. J. Robinson's book, *The Retail Sales Tax in Canada*. He talks, first of all, about the impact the retail sales tax has on production and any excess burden on consumers. The problem we have is that people generally do not have time to consider the effect of taxes. We are used to paying them, but there is the ripple effect of that tax increase on production and consumer confidence. The point I wanted to touch on is the effect it could have on Ontario's competitive position compared to other provinces and to the United States as we open up the free trade pact.

I think what we want to do is try to keep the cost of our services, the cost of our machinery, the cost of everything we are doing down as low as we can so that we will be even more competitive when we are dealing with our potential partners in trade and business south of the border. What the government is doing here is adding to the level of that taxation and therefore, increasing the cost and therefore, eventually moving us out of a competitive position that we are going to need and really want to have.

I could go on. If I could just take part of the second paragraph of chapter 5 on page 66 of A. J. Robinson's book: "At the same time, in order to be effective, taxes must be enforceable, administratively feasible and subject to at least a grudging acceptance by those on whom they are imposed. In other words, tax burdens must accord with generally accepted notions of social justice."

That really touches on what this tax is not. This tax is socially unjust. This tax does not even have the smallest modicum of acceptance, grudgingly or otherwise, from this side of the House, except for the rump that is over to my left.

"Failure to satisfy popular notions of social justice in a commodity tax system may not always result in a popular uprising to sweep away the taxes, as happened with the arbitrary and discriminatory system at the time of the French Revolution. But a commodity tax system could become unproductive and even unworkable if it were considered so unfair that evasion became widespread."

I want to touch upon that aspect of evasion of taxes. How many people in this province now are trading and bartering services, one with another, without there being receipts, without there being a formalized transaction taking place so that the accountant can catch it? I do not know. But I am worried. I think that becomes a major—

**Mr. Furlong:** Should we hire more inspectors to look after it?

**Mr. Cousens:** Well, one of the reasons we have people trying to evade the tax system is that in order to save that eight per cent there and then the other cost, they can save money. We have to do something about turning people off. This kind of continued taxation is a harassment of the people of Ontario and has a way of telling them: "We, as a government, really don't care. We are going to continue to take our share, like it or not."

I would like to touch now on the failure of this government to deal with proper spending of these tax dollars in one particular area. To me, some of this spending that goes on, if it has to do with Highway 407, will be a tremendous boon to me.

If it has to do with doing something about the hospital in Markham—and I have to tell the honourable member, I was in the cabinet when the hospital in Markham was approved and it was my pleasure to be able to persuade fellow members of cabinet that it was a worthwhile project because we were a fast-growing community. It serves the towns of Markham and Stouffville. The fact of the matter is the community raised \$6 million towards this huge project and the government now in power has continued to support and maintain that whole startup project of the Markham Stouffville Hospital.

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I will stop and give a compliment because to me it would have been a real travesty if our community did not have that hospital. We wanted to get it. We, as a community, are one of the few communities in Ontario that has raised locally the kinds of moneys necessary for that. Over \$6 million has been raised now by the community at large. There is no other community I know of that has succeeded in raising that kind of funding at the local level.

**Mr. Miller:** We've done it in Simcoe.

**Mr. Cousens:** Okay; that is an isolated example.

At the same time, we know there are beds being closed down in Centenary Hospital (Scarborough) and other hospitals across the province. We know it has happened in Cambridge Memori-



al Hospital. We know the difficulties these hospitals are having in balancing their budgets and then being forced to make up the deficits in the future.

Here is the balance we are talking about. I am able to support the spending of moneys in certain areas. I think that we, as citizens of Ontario, appreciate the fact that we are not going to have new areas, boom towns, open up unless we are going to provide those services.

The problem we have is that this government has picked up the land transfer taxes. It has picked up everybody else's property taxes. It picks up all the retail sales tax we are talking about now. It picks up the gasoline tax, the alcohol tax and every other tax we have. But this government has not done anything about providing the infrastructure for the growth of these new communities.

We see that infrastructure around Metropolitan Toronto grinding to a halt. In fact, last week when I was at the standing committee on public accounts, we were talking to the president of the domed stadium. Charles Magwood, president of the Stadium Corp. of Ontario, was talking about the wonderful things that are going on there and the \$30 million investment the province has made. I asked: "What are you doing about the parking and the traffic problems around there? Something like 15,000 to 20,000 people are going to come to the SkyDome using their cars. Not everybody is going to come by public transit, so how are you going to solve the problem?"

He was very kind and admitted it is a serious problem we are going to have around the domed stadium. There are 17,000 or so parking spots, but the one thing he agreed on by the time he was finished is there is no way to get to them. Here the province has built the domed stadium right in the heart of Toronto and there is no way of accessing it. It is going to be chaos. There is going to be massive chaos once that dome opens.

It is part of the infrastructure that has to go into a large world centre. It is no accident that Toronto is successful. Toronto is a beautiful city. But the government has to put the money out there where it counts. It has to build the roads where they are needed. It has to serve the people who are coming in and out of this important economic centre. They are coming in from all around Metropolitan Toronto. They are coming in from Durham, York and Peel. They come from within the city itself.

All they do is continue to increase the price on the Toronto Transit Commission. They continue to have a barrier around this city. There is no real

concerted effort to build the road systems or the transit systems to get the people in and out of this metropolis. That could be done. That would be an investment the people of Ontario would appreciate, instead of adding more civil servants.

I will go further. Highway 407 begins to be an important part of that whole ring around Metro. Highway 401 is congested totally right now. When Highway 407 is built, which runs north of Highway 401, that will relieve some of the traffic from Highway 401. It becomes a new east-west corridor across the South York region. It will connect with the Scarborough expressway that will come north of the zoo. It will connect over with Highway 410 and some of those other highways.

We need it. There are ways they could spend money and I would give them applause. I just gave them a compliment for spending money on the Markham Stouffville Hospital. Put the money where it counts and if the Treasurer—

**Mr. Ballinger:** It is about time you gave us that one. It is \$100 million.

**Mr. Cousens:** There are places where they have not put the money where it counts.

We are talking about the infrastructure that goes into making this whole centre of Ontario work. We are there to serve the rest of the province as well. I know I have a parochial sense when I talk about the needs around Metropolitan Toronto, but I have to say there is a sense of urgency.

I would like to touch upon one of the urgent needs I have had the good pleasure—

**Mr. Ballinger:** Two hours later and you are talking in circles.

**Mr. Cousens:** I really take exception, Mr. Speaker, that the member for Durham-York—

**Mr. Mackenzie:** He gets paid by volume. It's okay; don't worry. That's why he's paid so little.

**Mr. Cousens:** I have to bow to my very good friend the member for Hamilton East when he says the member for Durham-York gets paid by volume. That has to be absolutely correct and I thank him for that interjection.

I would like to just ask, why is this government not putting more money into education in fast-growing areas? I have a concern. They come along with the sales tax. If this sales tax were to go back into schools and portables—I have schools in my area that are 100 per cent portables. I have a high school where half the students were until recently housed in portables.

**Mr. Furlong:** You should have been more forceful in your cabinet. You could have got a lot more.



**Mr. Cousens:** The honourable member has to realize that if this government is going to speak out of both sides of its mouth, it will keep on doing what it is doing right now. On the one hand it will say, "Hey, we need your taxes," and on the other hand it does not flow those funds back into the communities that need them.

I have a letter here that comes from the—

**Mr. Furlong:** What was the capital allocation last year for your board?

**Mr. Cousens:** If I have the time, and I guess I have a few more moments, I would like to talk somewhat about the York Region Board of Education and the problems it has been having just to balance the budget. There is a trail of correspondence between the board and the Minister of Education (Mr. Ward).

I guess what they should be doing is copying to the Treasurer on this so that he begins to understand it, because what we are seeing is a shortfall in the funding of the education system. The government is raising the taxes and yet it is reducing the amount of allocations to school boards.

That is the point that comes out in a letter from the chairman of the York region board. Charles Cooper has had a series of letters in which he has tabled these concerns with the Minister of Education. The member for York Centre (Mr. Sorbara) has also had copies. What happens is that the only losers are the people of York region. The change in the funding formula this government brought about this past year has resulted in a shortfall.

I would like to read from this letter, just to put it into the record:

"The important thing for the York Region Board of Education is that, based on the 1987 grant formula, we expected an increase of \$13 million in our operating grants but only received \$4 million." There is a \$9-million shortfall. "The difference," as he says, "is the \$9-million shortfall alluded to in my letter." He goes back to the shortfall, "As you can see from our exchange of correspondence, the ministry acknowledges a \$2-million difference arising from the equalization factor assessment, but denies that we have been disadvantaged in any way."

The people who have been disadvantaged are all the taxpayers of York region, because once they have elected people to public office, those people are not allowed to create and build a deficit. They are the kind of people who would not want to operate with a deficit, so what they end up having to do is pay it out of the taxpayers' pockets this year.

I would like to touch on some of the problems the government is creating, because what we are talking about is bad government, a government that says: "Okay, York region is a growing new area, but we are not going to give you any benefit for that. In fact, we are going to penalize you harshly."

Here are some of the points that come out. The York Region Board of Education this year suffers a \$9-million shortfall just because of other policies that affect the one board, and it affects it in a way I would like to touch on.

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"In 1988, this board will purchase and equip \$5.5 million in portables and will receive approximately \$1 million in grants." There you have it: \$5.5 million in portables and you get \$1 million in grants. The remainder of that comes from the seniors and the people who have property investments.

"In 1988, we will spend \$200,000 net to relocate portables to accommodate enrolment shifts as new schools are opened." No consideration by the province; another \$200,000 from that board.

"In 1988, debenture payments increased by \$1,100,000 or 27.81 per cent over 1987," another cost picked up by the local ratepayers and not picked up by the government.

"In 1988, short-term borrowing costs for capital purposes increased by \$300,000 or 63.82 per cent," another bill not picked up by this government which was picked up previously.

"Additional net transportation costs are incurred because of transportation required to holding schools," another \$300,000 the local ratepayer picks up that the government does not pick up.

**Mr. Faubert:** What is the date of that letter you are reading?

**Mr. Cousens:** It is very current. I thank the honourable member who is speaking out of place again. The letter is November 3, 1988. I am not talking about history that is anything more than current history. Local taxpayers are paying over 60 per cent of their local taxes on education costs when this government made a commitment to reduce that ratio and allow the government to pick up more of those costs rather than the local ratepayers, and that is a crime.

That makes us mad. There is no reason for that. That is why they are going to sit and listen to more of this stuff about what they are doing wrong. The people of Ontario are the ones who are suffering. Here the government is raising taxes, but it is not doing anything to keep them



balanced. The people who have property are the ones who are paying the brunt of it.

**Mr. Callahan:** You are losing your cool, Don.

**Mr. Cousens:** These interruptions really are upsetting, Mr. Speaker.

Another issue where this government is throwing the responsibility on the local ratepayer and not carrying its costs has to do with the administrative costs. Every time you start having the growth that goes on in a growing school board in a growing situation, it takes more administration, yet this government does nothing to help them with that.

The startup costs of new schools: Many people do not realize the kind of growth that is going on in and around Metropolitan Toronto. It is not just York region. The problems I am talking about are true in Ottawa, they are true in Waterloo, they are true in Durham and they are true in Peel. Our York region public board is presently building and has under construction 11 schools. That is an awful lot of schools. The costs of providing new textbooks for students arriving during the year—

**Mr. Ballinger:** You were talking about schools.

**Mr. Cousens:** Hey, this is all part of the cost. You have formulas under which the board has to operate and if we end up having students come into the school system after that deadline of September 30, then the local ratepayers pick it up, not the government.

If it went and sent some of the taxes it is collecting back into the communities where it counts, then we would be in a position to say, "Well, you're spending some of it wisely." Then they would have a proper, fair tax distribution system. As it is right now, the local taxpayer is paying on his property over 60 per cent for his local school board and local services, and this government promised it would reduce that to 40 per cent.

That is what I am talking about. I am talking about irresponsibility on the part of this government for not standing up and being honest and having the integrity to live up to the promise it gave several years ago when it said, "When we're in government, we're going to change that around." It has not, and this local school board is suffering because of it, and so is every taxpayer in York region and every taxpayer across the province.

The costs of an opening inventory in new schools scheduled to open in 1988: The board goes through it and explains the costs it has to throw on the burden on the backs of the local

taxpayers who are paying their property tax. Here the government is adding another \$1.5 billion and it does not give a cent towards the textbooks. They are going to spend \$119,000 on textbooks which is not covered by the ministry. Another \$377,000—

**Mr. Faubert:** Is that \$119,000 on textbooks?

**Mr. Cousens:** Yes. I will send this to you so you can read it with both eyes with your mouth shut so you will have a chance to understand what it is really saying.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Cousens:** They are talking about an additional \$50,000 for caretaking supplies that are not provided. Again, the local ratepayers have to pay through their local taxes something this government is not covering. We are talking about furniture and equipment in excess of approvals. The approvals are so rigid that this board, the York region public board, must spend an extra \$335,000 this year on excess equipment and an extra \$103,000 on caretaking, for which they are receiving no assistance from the government, again adding to the burden of the local property owner.

**Mr. Faubert:** Who is responsible for the school boards?

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order, the member for Scarborough-Ellesmere.

**Mr. Cousens:** I will go on. The cost of running the system is being borne wrongly by the local ratepayers who own property and not by the government.

**An hon. member:** Give 'em hell, Don.

**Mr. Cousens:** I would like to, but they do not even listen. How can they listen when their mouths are working?

**Mr. Ballinger:** Don't bother Don so he will get his speech over with.

**Mr. Cousens:** I am just getting warmed up. I really feel it is time we laid it on the table. It is a good thing Hansard writes it down, because it did on the member for Brant-Haldimand back in 1973 when he said all the things about the iniquitous bill, and there it is to read now. I can read some more into the record if members would like.

In the meantime, let me deal with the York region public board. Here we have, as I have just described, 11 schools under construction. The burden of the costs of these schools on the local ratepayers amounts to an incredible amount of money that is not picked up—



**Mr. Faubert:** Who is paying for it.

**Mr. Cousens:** The interjections from this member, who is not sitting in his own seat—that can be for another day, some of the comments he is making there.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mr. Cousens:** I would like to touch on it because people say, “Well, a school is just going to happen.” I am very fortunate that within our local area, both in the York region public school system and the York region separate school board, we have a very close and good working relationship and work well with the town councils and with the regional council in trying to make our case to government.

Probably the one case we have not succeeded in making is the absolute unfairness of the government pushing so much of the costs of education on to the local property owners rather than assuming a larger percentage itself. Inasmuch as that was a commitment made by them when they were in opposition, I question their integrity for not doing it sooner so we can reverse the ratio, so the local ratepayers are somehow protected and somehow have that promise fulfilled that they elected them on.

Just in an ordinary new school—I said how many we have going—the extra cost on each new school, because you have to bring the principal on eight months ahead of time, is \$50,000 per school. A secretary comes in for two months ahead of time; that is \$3,000 per school. You need your caretakers in there in advance, the head caretaker for a few months and the other three people for another two months, and that becomes \$12,000.

There you are with each new school, over and above anything the province allocates. For an elementary school, you end up having \$69,500. That is times 11; it builds. This is not something they are paying out of this inordinate tax, the retail sales tax—it goes back to the local property owners. When you build a high school, you are talking about significant extra costs because the principals are more expensive and the staff is more, and we have a couple of high schools under way right now in York region.

These are costs that should be covered by their regressive increase in taxes, but instead it is going into things we do not know, into the big pot, into the additional staff they are hiring and into some of the programs they think are so good.

Our board has to spend money based on decisions made not by itself but by the province. All the costs I am talking about are costs that should be shared and covered by the province,

but instead have to be covered totally by the York Region public school board. There is the requirement through Bill 82 to provide in 1988 facilities for the handicapped. Our board has to cover the \$238,000 cost of that. Why did the province not help with that? Why did it not get involved in that? Instead, it is so easy to say, “We are going to do something,” and not give the money to help make it happen.

This board, the York region public board, lost a grant because of a change in formula for calculating eligible sums for French as a second language. This board lost \$310,000 because of that small, little calculation. I would like to see how much French-language services are costing in the province. I asked the honourable minister during estimates. I would just like to see. To me, the fact is that they are moving so rapidly to make this province something different from what people thought it would be—

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**Mr. Pouliot:** What’s that? Have the courage of your convictions. What are you talking about?

**Mr. Cousens:** I do not want to see Ontario made officially bilingual.

**Mr. Pouliot:** I have heard that tone for 400 years. Call it what it is, buddy.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Cousens:** The next point I want to make is on the kind of dollars the board spends on textbooks. The total cost of that is about \$470,000 for Ontario academic course textbooks. The fact that they are not given the grants for it means that the local board has to spend that.

Textbooks for Ontario Schools, Intermediate and Senior Divisions: The board is responding to the province’s demand to come in with OSIS, another \$200,000 the local ratepayers have to spend.

The net costs for instructional computers: The board is below budget on what it has to spend by \$500,000. Again, no money from the province. It is spent totally at the cost of the local taxpayers.

These are factors affecting the cost of education, and this government is not fulfilling its share. More and more budget requirements are needed each year for which no grant assistance is received from the province of Ontario to implement initiatives of provincial ministries and departments other than the Ministry of Education. Those include the day care centres. This has an impact on growing boards, and that is not picked up by the province necessarily, not all the costs. The local board picks it up.



The closing of centres for the developmentally handicapped: Many students are not being accepted back into their homes in other regions. Therefore, our board is providing alternative facilities. Section 16 facilities: The York region is an attractive area for Metropolitan children's aids societies to place emotionally disturbed children. Therefore, this board is picking up those costs.

The Ministry of Health has identified projects requiring funds. At the Ministry of Labour, the board has to respond to WHMIS, the new workplace hazardous materials information system. Again, that costs money.

The Attorney General (Mr. Scott) has come out with new regulations on pay equity and for fire marshal requirements. The Ministry of the Environment has come out with new regulations on polychlorinated biphenyl oil leaks and contaminated soil. We do not even begin to have enough money in the budget for the York region public board to cover those things.

The point I am trying to make is that if this government is going to collect money, then it should be responsible in the way it spends that money. That money should somehow live up to the kind of commitments they made when they took office. The first thing they said was that they would change the ratio of the amount of money that a local property holder would spend on education taxes. The fact is that they have done nothing but make it worse, because the property owner is now paying more toward education and the province is paying less. It has increased to the horrible level in York region of about 73 per cent paid for by the local property holder when it should be about 40 per cent. That is a difference that should be challenged.

In raising that today I am putting it on the record. The facts and figures I have are ones that have been tabled with the Minister of Education, and I now have them in the record so that the the Minister of Revenue and other responsible people in this government can have a chance to try to do something about it. If they do not, I will continue to call them irresponsible, and I think that is the bottom line.

What we see here is a tax increase that is, as my good friend the Treasurer said back in the 1970s when he talked about it then, improper, and it is still improper. He called it iniquitous. It is still iniquitous.

The moment that the government members come along and come to their senses, they will realize the people of Ontario do not want to spend their money on the things the government is

spending it on. The government should put it into the things that are going to count. They should start running the shop as if they really are responsible rather than just drunken sailors throwing it all over the place. They should invest money in the future, reduce the deficit and get on with running this place in a fiscally responsible way. They are not doing it. They have not begun to do it. I do not think there is much hope they will do it.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Questions and comments. Le député de lac Nipigon? Someone?

**Mr. Pouliot:** It is not my intention to spend too much time on the renowned tax grab by the Treasurer, which was indeed ill-timed and, just as important, zapped a full one per cent away from consumers, mostly the middle class.

I want to talk briefly about the timing, because it does relate to what is systematic and deliberate and represents what is the worst in political endeavour and in this government.

If we can go back to 1982, when the third party—

Interjections.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mr. Pouliot:** It is not easy being interrupted and to interrupt, Mr. Speaker, and I do not envy your job as the caterer to what is becoming more and more a day care centre as opposed to a House where honourable members have a chance to voice the legitimate grievances of their constituents.

If we go back to the year of our Lord 1982, when members of the third party increased the sales tax in Ontario from seven per cent to eight per cent, we can readily acquiesce that those times were not good times economically, that it was the eve of an economic recovery, but if we go back again to 1982, the government needed the revenues. But that is not the case with the budget of April 1988.

The facts will show that it was immediately after the election of September 10, 1987, and that during the course of the campaign leading to the September 10 majority government with the Liberals, not one word was said about the possibility of increasing the sales tax. We were reminded that the times were indeed good times, that revenues were up and there was no need to hit the public purse.

It was shortly thereafter, in the first year of a majority government, that cynicism struck. It was that member who is the culprit, who literally, at a time when revenues were up by a full \$3 billion, saw fit to generate an additional



\$1 billion from the taxpayers, the average consumers in Ontario.

We know the kind of style, method and approach that characterize the Treasurer: in the fourth year of the same majority government, regardless of the revenue base, the likelihood of the sales tax's being dropped by one per cent was indeed a reality, or would become a reality. It borders on cynicism. The reasoning, the rationale behind the intent and the spirit of the Treasurer was that we needed the revenue to enhance services, to provide more essential services in northern Ontario, for instance.

The tax grab is real. There is one per cent less in the economy; we are one per cent closer to climbing the proverbial wall, because the middle class is taxed to death. The poor people are not getting the benefits and the rich are getting away with concentration and not paying their share. In lieu of a transfer of payments, we got a promise of \$30 million, which was to be the heritage fund.

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We are not talking about the partnership for the domed stadium where, when times are bad, the taxpayer is left holding the bag, but when times are good for "consortiums," then you forget about partnership and you revert the profits to shareholders.

You are now paying eight per cent in northern Ontario for almost any services, goods or commodities that you need to live. It means more because our families are somewhat larger. We do not earn the same money, on average, as people in southern Ontario. We do not have the same family income. We do not have job opportunities for spouses that are as lucrative or as numerous as they are in southern Ontario. We travel greater distances. We need more fuel oil. It costs us more for about every item at the marketplace. So the consequence of that one per cent additional sales tax is a lot harder.

What makes it more cynical is that we have the hand that gives an additional one per cent, and yet we do not receive services that other people take for granted. The reality is of having what are really two Ontarios: one for the most fortunate and one where the degree of unemployment is the lowest in the land—one, on the other hand, where in some northern communities you still have 30 and, at times during the winter months, 35 to 38 per cent unemployment, to say nothing of the northern reserves, where unemployment is the order of the day, where 80 to 85 per cent of a potential workforce does not have jobs.

Yet they too, like all Ontarians, have to make a supplementary contribution when, again, there was absolutely no need, except that the Treasurer could not resist the temptation: the temptation to sin—deliberately, systematically, with vengeance; an attack, picking the pockets of the people of Ontario on their other endeavours—because we know that what is being done is morally wrong and should never be allowed to take place.

People would be arrested for soliciting. It is as simple as that. Read the new statutes. We were lured.

This is the kind of confrontation, when you are picking people's pockets, that will take a generation or, in the government's case, a political term, to heal.

I have searched long and hard. I, for one, am not a very partisan politician. I am here to represent the people of the riding of Lake Nipigon, and they have given me a mandate to look issue by issue, regardless of political affiliation, and I have tried to adhere religiously to that philosophy: that you will look at every bill that is being presented and give your support or not, depending on the substance of the bill. And yes, I have searched long and hard for qualities, searched for the need associated with this tax grab, and truly, I was unable to find any.

The Treasurer of Ontario had a perhaps unique opportunity, by virtue and reason of a supplementary \$3 billion coming in, to give, yes, a supplemental exposure to benefits for the people of the north. The tragedy is that the opportunity passed and the Treasurer missed it. That is really the sad part of it.

I have just received a note by way of a page, "Right on, Gilles." The respect I have for members of this House does not allow me to divulge the name of the sender, but I want to thank my distinguished colleague for his support. I know that when I stand to talk about the legitimate grievances, the needs of the people of the north, I do not indeed stand alone. This will attest to that.

The note is right. It was a callous move, nothing short of that. The words are not too strong, and I choose them very, very carefully. The note also mentions that the Treasurer indeed will be judged very harshly. Seldom in Ontario, when it comes to tax reforms or tax measures, has the uproar of opposition been so unanimous. That opposition was spontaneous. It was not solicited by people from the third party, by newspapers or by television ads. People spontaneously, the men and women who have been subjected to this injustice, stood up like soldiers



at their posts and said: "Nixon, my man, you've gone too far. Enough is enough. We aren't going to take it any more."

I am truly disappointed. It was a sad day for the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. In conclusion, more important is the missed opportunity, the moments you never get back. I am very disappointed indeed. But the opportunity will be there one more time, and I hope the Treasurer will listen to the voices of wisdom, to the voice of reason, and finally address what is right and what should have been done in the first place.

**Mr. Harris:** I am pleased to rise for a brief couple of moments and to associate myself with the remarks that have been put forward by the member for Lake Nipigon (Mr. Pouliot). I want to say that the member indicated that when he speaks on behalf of his constituents and when he speaks on behalf of northern Ontario and that region of the province—admittedly a less fortunate region than southern Ontario, the area of the province where the Premier and the Treasurer and those people who make these despicable decisions come from—he does not speak alone.

Indeed, I tell members that he does not speak alone, that I am pleased to stand in my place in this Legislature, as I am pleased to do it outside the Legislature with the member for Lake Nipigon, in his riding, in my riding, in regions of northern Ontario and particularly in the other regions of this province as well, areas less fortunate than the big, rich metropolitan areas. I am pleased to do that and to stand with him and to associate myself with the remarks that he makes.

I also want to say that I have found, over the period of time that I have known the member—he followed in the footsteps of a very capable member for Lake Nipigon, a former Speaker of this chamber; somebody I was pleased to associate myself with as well—that he has filled big shoes. I want to say to the member that I believe he has, over the period of years, filled those shoes. That is a great compliment.

I say to members that when he speaks on behalf of his constituents he speaks from the heart, and those who mock him in silly mockery from across the floor or in the rump to my left do so at great peril.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Time is up. Thank you.  
1730

**Mr. Kormos:** I am pleased to be able to discuss this particular bill because it is a sad bill. Why I say that is because what it has done is forced government members to compromise their intellectual integrity because it remains—

**Mr. Faubert:** It is all your campaign.

**Mr. Kormos:** The campaign is not over until the next general election.

It remains that every Liberal in this Legislature knows that this is a regressive form of taxation.

The Liberals knew that in the 1970s when they criticized the Tory government's—because, after all, retail sales tax, we should not forget, is a creature and a creation of the Tories—retail sales tax system. They recognized it was unfair because it was regressive. They recognized it was unfair because it taxed the wrong people in our society and province.

As I say, just as the Tories today speak in those sorts of terms and, indeed, quote the Liberal critic of the day to attack the Liberals' legislation now, the Liberals who are advocating this legislation know now, as they did in the 1970s, that the legislation is unfair, regressive and improper.

That is why I say the legislation is sad because it makes those people who advocate it compromise their intellectual integrity, interestingly in much the same way as some other bills before this Legislature have done the same thing. Sunday shopping and the amendments to the Retail Business Holidays Act have done much the same thing: have forced Liberal members of this House to compromise their intellectual integrity. Indeed, because—

**Hon. Mrs. Smith:** No, they read the bill so they do not have to compromise their integrity.

**Mr. Kormos:** There are some who may not have it, but I am saying those who had integrity are being forced to compromise it by being forced to defend what they know is very unpopular legislation in the province.

**Hon. Mrs. Smith:** Have you read it?

**Mr. Kormos:** I have read it and re-read it and re-read it. I have also listened to the workers of this province, to the senior citizens, to the retail workers, both organized and unorganized, and to people in the trade union movement and trade unionists.

I have listened to the clergy, priests, ministers and rabbis who recognize that a common pause day is a valuable thing in our society and who recognize that preserving Sunday as a common pause day is something that is historically significant, and who would urge not only us, who are strong opponents of that legislation, to continue to oppose it, but who also would urge those people who, as I say, have been forced into a scenario where they have compromised their integrity.

There is really only one of two choices. The Solicitor General (Mrs. Smith) made the point well, because either there was no integrity to begin with—in which case, I would not dare suggest that it has been compromised—or there was a position of integrity.

The real proof of the matter is in the quotes read earlier this afternoon of the member for Brant-Haldimand, then in a critic position, wherein he made some very clear comments about the type of retail sales tax we are talking about today, where he talked about it being iniquitous and improper.

The fact is that it is the same retail sales tax system he was talking about back in the 1970s that is being introduced by the Liberals today. I dare say that they would find their position indefensible and they certainly have no response to the quotes that were read to them.

One of the other interesting things is that one wonders why this type of taxation would be introduced at this particular point in time. One recognizes that it is spoken of in terms of being a one per cent increase. We all know that is grossly improper. It is not a one per cent increase; it is a 14 per cent increase—indeed, 14 per cent and change. It is a significant increase in taxation.

There were some mumblings and comments that were spoken of when the retail sales tax was increased from five per cent to seven per cent—they were substantially greater even than for the 14 per cent—but once again it was spoken of in terms of two percentage points, just as this is being spoken of in terms of one percentage point.

It taxes the wrong people in the community. It taxes the people who can least afford to pay taxes. It is not just an insult; it is an attack on people who work for a living in our communities, and in communities like the one I come from in the Welland-Thorold area, they certainly did not get 14 per cent increases in their wages last year. I can tell the House that with certainty.

**Hon. Mrs. Smith:** Did they get one per cent?

**Mr. Kormos:** That argument is not even sophistry. That argument does not even qualify to be described as sophistry.

They did not get 14 per cent increases in their wages. I really think there are some people who may have swallowed their own bait. Maybe it is warranted, because I suspect there are some people who still want to call it a one per cent increase in retail sales tax. We know it is a 14 per cent increase.

The calculation is as follows. The new retail sales tax is eight per cent, the old one was seven per cent and the calculation is like this: You take

one over seven and you multiply it by 100. So you divide 100 by seven and you end up with 14 and change. That is how you determine the percentage of increase that it is: 14 and change.

The Liberals know it is not fair to workers in the community. The government members know it is not fair to people on fixed incomes who, once again, did not get 14 per cent increases from this government in their living allowances. Yet there is an effort to perpetrate a fraud that it is but one per cent.

As I say, the saddest thing about it is both its regressiveness and the fact that it has forced Liberal members into a position where they have compromised their integrity. I suggest that indeed they have.

**Mr. Harris:** I am pleased to rise. I wanted to comment briefly on the remarks of the member for Welland-Thorold (Mr. Kormos). He has asked a couple of questions since I have been in the House. He may have given other speeches and debates, but I have not had the pleasure or the opportunity to be here when he has entered into the debate.

I will not be quite as glowing as I was for the member for Lake Nipigon. It took me three years to get to know the member for Lake Nipigon. Perhaps three years from now I will be in a position to comment at great length on the member for Welland-Thorold, but I do want to comment on a couple of things that he said.

First of all, the 14 per cent. I think that is important for people to understand. I understand from the interjections by the Solicitor General that she had difficulty understanding that. That does not surprise me. None the less, I want to say that a 14 per cent increase is indeed what was perpetrated.

I acknowledge that taxes have to be levied and taxes have to be collected, but this particular tax has been described by members of all three parties as an admittedly regressive tax. So to go 14 per cent on this particular one is indeed most unfortunate.

**1740**

I also want to comment because the member for Welland-Thorold indicated one of the reasons he is in this Legislature—and I am sure there are others, as I believe is the case with the member for London North (Mrs. Cunningham), but I believe one of the key reasons they are in this Legislature is this budget. It is because of this particular tax increase. The only measures we have had since the budget have been two by-elections and indeed, fortunately, we do not



have any more on the other side of the House, so we have seen what has happened.

**The Acting Speaker:** The member's time has expired.

**Mr. Harris:** I want to say that I think—

**The Acting Speaker:** The member's time has expired.

**Mr. Harris:** Oh, has it? That is most unfortunate, because I was just getting started.

**Hon. Mrs. Smith:** I would like to explain that we can all take per cents of per cents and it always makes very interesting conversation. If you work out what per cent of your children are this and that, it makes wonderful conversation, but the fact is, a tax that is eight per cent on a dollar is eight cents on a dollar, so a dollar costs you \$1.08. It used to be the dollar cost you \$1.07. It has gone up one per cent. That way, \$1.07 now costs you \$1.08. So it is one one hundred and seventh of one one hundred and eighth now, compared to what it used to be, because your tax is an increase on a dollar; it does not stand by itself.

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** I can now see why the Premier put the member for London South (Mrs. Smith) in the job that she is in, and certainly not Revenue or Finance or anything to do with that.

It is so interesting to listen to the Liberal members on this particular bill and on sales tax, because I was here—in fact I was our party's Finance critic—when the former government raised sales tax or expanded the coverage of sales tax, and my God, did those guys take a different position then. There was no argument about whether it was a 14 per cent increase.

How can anybody in this Legislature not agree with the member for Welland-Thorold when he says it is 14 per cent? When you raise income tax and you raise it one point, you do not come back and say, "Well, it is only this percentage of their income or this percentage." You figure it out. If it is an increase of one point and there are 50 points, that is a two per cent increase in the income tax. Of course it is a two per cent increase in the income tax.

It is obviously very advantageous for their party to say, "We have only raised sales tax one per cent," but they have raised it one seventh of what the base was, and that is a 14 per cent increase.

They should not try to mislead the people of this province. They should tell them the truth. They should tell them the truth about what they are trying to do with their conspiracy with the federal government and trying to have a national

sales tax as well and how, during the whole federal election, the Treasurer and the Minister of Revenue were rubbing their hands because they saw the money that would pour in at the provincial level as well.

The fact of the matter is that when the Liberal Party was the official opposition, it took one position on these types of regressive taxes and spoke like New Democrats. It is another example of speaking like New Democrats when they are opposition and acting like Tories when they are government. We see it on this bill again.

**Mr. Morin-Strom:** I would like to compliment our new member for Welland-Thorold for an excellent address on behalf of his residents and all the people of Ontario, and I would like to comment just briefly about the government's contention in terms of the percentage increase that this reflects in our sales tax going from seven per cent on consumer items to eight per cent.

In fact, the increase is not one per cent, as one of the ministers has just claimed, and if this is a reflection of the economic intelligence of this Liberal government, it is really an indication of why this government is in such serious trouble and does not know where it is going in terms of taxation for the province.

In fact, if one looks at the amount of the increase in revenue that this government is going to take in terms of its sales tax take, we will see an increase of more than 14 per cent, assuming that the level of the economy and the level of purchases in the economy are the same from one year to another.

When my colleague tells us that it is a more than 14 per cent increase, he is being generous to the government because we know that the economy of the province is expanding. The number of purchases going on in the economy, based on the amount of inflation and the growth of the gross national product, would imply that the number of sales at the consumer level that are going to go on are going to go up by at least five per cent this year over last year. The take is going to be a five per cent increase on the sales tax because it goes up with the increase of the economy, plus another 14 per cent, so it is a total increase compounding about a 20 per cent take from the people of Ontario.

**The Acting Speaker:** Thank you. That concludes the time allotted for comments and questions. The member for Welland-Thorold has indicated that he does not wish to reply. Are there any other speakers who wish to participate in this debate?

**Mr. Mackenzie:** I am pleased to rise to indicate my opposition to this bill. I cannot resist. I do not claim to be one of the intellectuals or brains in our party at all, just a very ordinary guy, but I cannot understand how this government and some of the ministers can tell us that an increase from seven cents to eight cents is not a one seventh or a 14 per cent increase. It does not make sense. It is an increase of more than 14 per cent in the sales tax applied.

I think my colleague the member for Sault Ste. Marie said it very well when he also tied in the additional revenue. That one cent that the minister likes to talk about, that increase of more than 14 per cent in the sales tax brings in almost \$1 billion: \$900 million and some additional to Ontario. Let me tell members, we are not dealing with peanuts here and we are certainly dealing with a major percentage increase in taxes.

I think there are a few things that should be said. I guess the level of service seems to have lowered with the many changes in the last two elections, but I have had a little better than 13 years here. I have sat in this House and on occasion will admit—and I do not often admit this, being a fairly partisan kind of a guy—that I enjoyed the speeches of the current Treasurer when he was railing in full blast.

I noticed that some of the members dug up some of his quotes today, and when he was railing in full blast against the Tory government and the finance ministers of the day and the budgets they brought in, he talked about and he did use the words “iniquitous and unfair and unjust” increases in the sales tax, and I sat here and listened and enjoyed it. Members can all go back and read it in Hansard.

So I do find it a little bit hypocritical that the first major tax increase, which is going to affect lower- and fixed-income people more than it will the high-income people, is a sales tax increase. We knew it was coming. We have in this House the standing committee on finance and economic affairs, and some members—I am not sure if there are any in the chamber right now—who sit on that committee were invited a little better than a year ago to a meeting in the Treasurer’s office across the way here.

One of the things that we discussed was whether or not we would really have any input into tax fairness or fairer taxes in Ontario and what kind of taxes might be forthcoming. It was really enjoyable sitting down and eating the nice little sandwiches we had—on the Treasurer’s budget, I guess—over the lunch hour and having a

chat with the Treasurer and some of his officials in his office.

Then he got into, “Well, we want fair taxes,” because our committee had been discussing fair taxes and whether or not we could find a fairer system in Ontario. We got into the issue of fairer taxes, and what did the Treasurer say to us? “Well, that’s one of the things, but you have to admit”—I forget his exact words—“that you are certainly tempted when you look at that kind of revenue. Do you realize the kind of revenue that there is in sales tax?”

So help me Hannah, you could see the dollar signs go around in his eyes and hear the click, click, click just like a slot machine. I came back to my caucus right after that luncheon and I think I told a couple of reporters when they asked me what might be coming in the way of a budget: “I’ll tell you right now that what we are going to see in Ontario is a major increase in the sales taxes.”

**1750**

It is the very argument that this Treasurer has used. I have sat in this House and listened to it being described as unfair to ordinary people in the province, as being regressive and unjust. I think “iniquitous” was one of his words in the various times he has gone after the Tory government for originally bringing in this tax, and what do we get? The biggest single jump, one per cent; additional items across the board, \$900 million. It is not a fair tax and everyone knows it is not a fair tax.

So forgive me, my colleagues in this House, if I am more than a little bit cynical. It is obviously a case of, “Hey, I say one thing but I do another.” Unfortunately, we are seeing that in all too many areas and the people should realize where we are seeing it and who we are seeing it from. In this case, the unfair tax which is hitting the people right across this province came from the Peterson Liberal government and it came from the Treasurer, who himself has argued for many years against just such a tax. The people of Ontario should clearly understand who is doing it to them.

I think there are a few other things which should be said. We do not have a fair tax system. We have an increasing amount of our tax revenue coming from individual taxes in this province and this country and a decreasing amount coming from the major corporations. We also do not have a minimum tax. I think it is worth putting on record one other thing that happened prior to our meeting with the Treasurer in the standing



committee on finance and economic affairs of this Legislature.

We had before us a number of groups which were arguing for tax breaks. We had one or two poverty groups, one or two social services groups which were arguing for fairer taxes, but we had before us some business interests. They were arguing that if we are going to keep business competitive in Ontario, we should really see that they not get any increase in taxes. Some of the ideas that were floating around were a little bit dangerous, and I got a little bit annoyed at the gentlemen who were sitting with us.

I forget all their names, but one of them stands out, and I simply said: "Well, I have some difficulty with the fact that there are hundreds and thousands of major companies in Ontario that are not paying any taxes at all and are able to find ways and means to get out of paying taxes in this province. But we are paying it and we are paying an increasing percentage of the tax load in the province."

One of the gentlemen got a little bit angry and said, "That's really not a fair argument," and then he went on. Until that time I did not realize who he was, but he was one of the executive officers of the Hudson's Bay Co. His argument to our committee, and there were a number of Liberals as well as two Tories there, was: "We have not paid any corporate taxes for the last three years, but it's unfair to say we're cheating the system. It's unfair to say we're the big, bad culprits and that's why the rest of you are having to pay additional taxes in this province. The reason we're not paying any taxes is that we have five years to claim losses, and we had some major losses in the three previous years. We had some restructuring, some rationalization."

I do not know whether they closed some of their stores down. I know they modernized some of them. If you go up and look at the Bay at Yonge and Bloor, you will realize that very quickly. They had not paid any taxes for three years, but it was not fair to say they should be paying taxes. Incidentally, they had made very good profits, they admitted, for the last three years, but they were able to claim the losses in the previous years.

Can members of this House tell me, any one of them, whether a worker in the province who is losing his job now because of plant shutdowns or transfers, who is out of work for six months or maybe has to take another job after 20 or 30 years' service, and is only going to get about half the pay he was getting previously, can claim the losses he has suffered over the next five years?

That is one of the kinds of loopholes that are there in the taxes. I do not know of a worker in this province—and it can affect him a heck of a lot more than it probably affected the Bay, and I think it is just one example of what we are talking about—who can claim his losses or can make up the lower income he may have made or the no income at all or the difference between unemployment insurance or whatever he had to accept to live on. It does not happen.

We discussed that in the committee, but we certainly have not seen any move that way in this province. We have not seen any move to any kind of minimum corporate tax, which is one of the things we could look at. We have not seen any of these moves in a really basic, reforming and fair kind of tax system in this province.

Even though this information was all there and could have been looked at by the Treasurer, what we did see was the Liberal government opt instead for the easiest way. It was not the fairest way; fairness never entered into it. That was obvious, as far as I was concerned, from the Treasurer's remarks. They opted for the easiest way, almost \$1 billion. Put the one cent on across the board, and who pays that? The minister knows darned well. Whether he likes the idea or the charge or not, he knows that it falls much more heavily on ordinary and lower-income people in Ontario. That is the route we have opted for.

I am telling members there is something wrong with that approach. There is something wrong with the unwillingness to take a look at the kind of money that the Bay has made over the past three years—as I say, that is just one company—and at why there should not be some kind of minimum tax there. There is something wrong with saying that we are going to let the people pay the increasing percentage of the revenue of Ontario.

It has been accelerating so rapidly since 1966 it really scares me, because there are a lot of bucks here. Personal taxes were 64.5 per cent in 1966 and corporate taxes were 35.5 per cent of all the revenue that we needed to run this province. What are they in 1987? I do not have the 1988 figures; they are probably worse. It has gone from 64.5 per cent that we as ordinary taxpayers were paying—and you can factor in the sales tax in that—to 72.9 per cent that we are now paying. What are the companies paying? Most of them are doing quite well, thank you, especially over the last three or four years. They are down from 35.5 per cent to 27.1 per cent of the income.

I simply ask, how long are we going to let the ordinary people get it in the neck in taxes? That is what is happening. How long are we going to see the kind of increased tax load we got when we got that 14 per cent increase in the sales tax in Ontario that this Liberal government brought in after having spent years saying how unjust and unfair it was? When is the government going to start taking a look at exactly where it is going and how many mistakes it is going to make?

I think that was one. I think it is going to cost the government. I think it has already cost it. I think people see it, just as I think the Sunday shopping issue, the Bill 162 issue and probably now the Temagami issue are mistakes the government has made.

I am not sure if I have a half a minute yet. If I do, I want to add one more thing. Our committee had another meeting, one year later, in the Treasurer's office. I was more than a little upset to listen to the Treasurer say how fundamentally he was opposed to this national sales tax approach we have. But what then happened in the course of our conversation in his office? His real concern was whether Ontario would be the loser; whether it could be put into place in such a way that Ontario made sure it got its fair share.

I can see this government once again almost on side with the federal government and the kind of

approach it is using, because it is the easiest way to get a pile of big bucks in. But it certainly is not the fairest way in this country of ours. I think the government has some answering to do for this bill, and it is why I oppose it. I think it has some answering to do for what appears to be the direction it is heading in in terms of taxes. It is certainly not a direction of this Liberal government that is fair for ordinary working people in this province.

On motion by Mr. Mackenzie, the debate was adjourned.

#### BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

**Hon. Mr. Conway:** I would like to make a business statement for tomorrow.

Tomorrow afternoon, following question period we will complete the estimates of the Ministry of Health, after which we will proceed to the various revenue bills standing in the name of the Minister of Revenue (Mr. Grandmaître): Bill 122, Bill 121 and Bill 120. We will proceed as time permits. It may be that we will just continue the debate on Bill 122, but if we should complete that, we will then move on, in order, to Bill 121 and Bill 120.

The House adjourned at 6 p.m.



**ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS\***  
(130 seats)

First Session, 34th Parliament

**Lieutenant Governor: Hon. Lincoln M. Alexander, PC, QC**

Adams, Peter (Peterborough L)  
 Allen, Richard (Hamilton West NDP)  
 Ballinger, William G. (Durham-York L)  
 Beer, Charles (York North L)  
 Black, Kenneth H. (Muskoka-Georgian Bay L)  
 Bossy, Maurice L. (Chatham-Kent L)  
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 Brandt, Andrew S. (Sarnia PC)  
 Breaugh, Michael J. (Oshawa NDP)  
 Brown, Michael A. (Algoma-Manitoulin L)  
 Bryden, Marion (Beaches-Woodbine NDP)  
 Callahan, Robert V. (Brampton South L)  
 Campbell, Sterling (Sudbury L)  
**Caplan, Hon. Elinor**, Minister of Health (Oriole L)  
 Carrothers, Douglas A. (Oakville South L)  
 Charlton, Brian A. (Hamilton Mountain NDP)  
 Chiarelli, Robert (Ottawa West L)  
 Cleary, John C. (Cornwall L)  
 Collins, Shirley (Wentworth East L)  
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 Cooke, David R. (Kitchener L)  
 Cooke, David S. (Windsor-Riverside NDP)  
 Cordiano, Joseph (Lawrence L)  
 Cousens, W. Donald (Markham PC)  
 Cunningham, Dianne E. (London North PC)  
 Cureatz, Sam L. (Durham East PC)  
**Curling, Hon. Alvin**, Minister of Skills Development (Scarborough North L)  
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 Dietsch, Michael M. (St. Catharines-Brock L)  
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 Faubert, Frank (Scarborough-Ellesmere L)  
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 Ferraro, Rick E. (Guelph L)  
 Fleet, David (High Park-Swansea L)

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**Fulton, Hon. Ed**, Minister of Transportation (Scarborough East L)  
 Furlong, Allan W. (Durham Centre L)  
**Grandmaître, Hon. Bernard C.**, Minister of Revenue (Ottawa East L)  
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 Hampton, Howard (Rainy River NDP)  
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 Hart, Christine E. (York East L)  
 Henderson, D. James (Etobicoke-Humber L)  
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 Johnson, Jack (Wellington PC)  
 Johnston, Richard F. (Scarborough West NDP)  
 Kanter, Ron (St. Andrew-St. Patrick L)  
**Kerrio, Hon. Vincent G.**, Minister of Natural Resources (Niagara Falls L)  
 Keyes, Kenneth A. (Kingston and The Islands L)  
 Kormos, Peter (Welland-Thorold NDP)  
 Kozyra, Taras B. (Port Arthur L)  
**Kwinter, Hon. Monte**, Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Wilson Heights L)  
 Laughren, Floyd (Nickel Belt NDP)  
 LeBourdais, Linda (Etobicoke West L)  
 Leone, Laureano (Downsview L)  
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 Mackenzie, Bob (Hamilton East NDP)  
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 McGuigan, James F. (Essex-Kent L)  
 McGuinty, Dalton J. (Ottawa South L)  
 McLean, Allan K. (Simcoe East PC)  
**McLeod, Hon. Lyn**, Minister of Colleges and Universities (Fort William L)  
 Miclash, Frank (Kenora L)

Miller, Gordon I. (Norfolk L)  
 Morin, Gilles E. (Carleton East L)  
 Morin-Strom, Karl E. (Sault Ste. Marie NDP)  
 Neumann, David E. (Brantford L)  
 Nicholas, Cindy (Scarborough Centre L)  
 Nixon, J. Bradford (York Mills L)  
**Nixon, Hon. Robert F.**, Deputy Premier,  
 Treasurer of Ontario and Minister of Eco-  
 nomics and Minister of Financial Institutions  
 (Brant-Haldimand L)  
**Oddie Munro, Hon. Lily**, Minister of Culture  
 and Communications (Hamilton Centre L)  
 Offer, Steven (Mississauga North L)  
**O'Neil, Hon. Hugh P.**, Minister of Tourism and  
 Recreation (Quinte L)  
 O'Neill, Yvonne (Ottawa-Rideau L)  
 Owen, Bruce (Simcoe Centre L)  
**Patten, Hon. Richard**, Minister of Government  
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 Pelissero, Harry E. (Lincoln L)  
**Peterson, Hon. David R.**, Premier and Presi-  
 dent of the Council and Minister of Inter-  
 governmental Affairs (London Centre L)  
 Philip, Ed (Etobicoke-Rexdale NDP)  
**Phillips, Hon. Gerry**, Minister of Citizenship  
 (Scarborough-Agincourt L)  
 Poirier, Jean, Deputy Speaker and Chairman of  
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 and Russell L)  
 Pollock, Jim (Hastings-Peterborough PC)  
 Polsinelli, Claudio (Yorkview L)  
 Poole, Dianne (Eglinton L)  
 Pope, Alan W. (Cochrane South PC)  
 Pouliot, Gilles (Lake Nipigon NDP)  
 Rae, Bob (York South NDP)  
**Ramsay, Hon. David**, Minister of Correctional  
 Services (Timiskaming L)  
 Ray, Michael C., Deputy Chairman of the  
 Committees of the Whole House (Windsor-  
 Walkerville L)  
 Reville, David (Riverdale NDP)  
 Reycraft, Douglas R. (Middlesex L)

**Riddell, Hon. Jack**, Minister of Agriculture and  
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 Roberts, Marietta L. D. (Elgin L)  
 Runciman, Robert W. (Leeds-Grenville PC)  
 Ruprecht, Tony (Parkdale L)  
**Scott, Hon. Ian G.**, Attorney General  
 (St. George-St. David L)  
 Smith, David W. (Lambton L)  
**Smith, Hon. E. Joan**, Solicitor General  
 (London South L)  
 Sola, John (Mississauga East L)  
**Sorbara, Hon. Gregory S.**, Minister of Labour  
 (York Centre L)  
 South, Larry (Frontenac-Addington L)  
 Sterling, Norman W. (Carleton PC)  
 Stoner, Norah (Durham West L)  
 Sullivan, Barbara (Halton Centre L)  
**Sweeney, Hon. John**, Minister of Community  
 and Social Services (Kitchener-Wilmot L)  
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 garry PC)  
**Ward, Hon. Christopher C.**, Minister of  
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No. 114

# Hansard

## Official Report of Debates

### Legislative Assembly of Ontario

**First Session, 34th Parliament**

Thursday, December 1, 1988

Speaker: Honourable Hugh A. Edighoffer  
Clerk of the House: Claude L. DesRosiers



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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Thursday, December 1, 1988

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayers.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

#### REFUGEE CLAIMANTS

Mr. Ballinger moved resolution 52:

That, in the opinion of this House, recognizing the government of Canada's inability to effectively address the issue of refugee determination which has resulted in a backlog of more than 9,000 refugee claims in the greater Toronto area alone; and recognizing that the federal policy is to refuse to issue work permits to refugee claimants which has the result of virtually forcing all of these claimants on to social assistance rolls, costing the government of Ontario approximately \$35 million this year; and further recognizing that amending this policy would not negatively impact on the employment opportunities of Canadians and landed immigrants and would save the taxpayers money, given the present employment opportunities in Metropolitan Toronto and vicinity and the enthusiasm of claimants to work; therefore, the government of Ontario should urge the government of Canada to immediately amend its policy and issue temporary work permits until such time as the status of refugee claimants is determined.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member has up to 20 minutes to make his presentation and may reserve any portion of that for the windup.

**Mr. Ballinger:** I am pleased to rise this morning in private members' resolution time to put forth this resolution. The purpose of this particular resolution is a result of the tremendous pressure that Ontario is under due to the current policy of the federal government not to issue temporary work permits to refugees.

It is important for me to make the point that our purpose this morning is not to bash the federal government, but it reminds me of the story of trying to teach the donkey how to learn. The most important thing you do with a donkey is take a two-by-four and hit him over the head first, and that is primarily to get his attention. Quite frankly, with this resolution, that is precisely what we are trying to do.

The Minister of Community and Social Services (Mr. Sweeney) has had a great amount of concern since January of this year based on the fact that Ontario is spending somewhere in the nature of \$35 million this year in general welfare assistance for the refugees who are landing in Ontario.

In the greater Toronto area, there is such a great opportunity for working. No matter where you go in Toronto, there are all kinds of signs in windows, illuminated signs out in front of small factories, saying, "We are hiring this week." With the federal government's current policy of not issuing temporary work permits, all of these jobs go open. There are not enough people in the area to fill the positions because of the growth in the economy of Ontario.

Because of the \$35 million it is costing Ontario alone, it is a tremendous drain on the other parts of our Ministry of Community and Social Services budget. We could be spending that money in a much more worthwhile area. If you include the total amount of money being spent on refugee claimants on GWA across Ontario this year, it is somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$90 million.

Now, what that does to people who land here as refugees who are willing and eager to work is it takes that incentive away from them. It is an education process that we as government should not be involved in, and that is encouraging people who are eager to work to be provided by the government with a paycheque. That is not our role as government and it certainly is not what they want as refugees. They come to Canada, hopefully, to start a new life.

Just so it is apparent that it is not only Ontario which is concerned, or our government—because one of the problems we get into is the fear of partisan politics, we versus they; that is not our concern at all. Our concern is trying to convince the federal government that it should seriously address this issue which will help all three levels of government. There is only one loser in this issue and that loser is the taxpayer. They pay the freight.

Since I started collecting information and doing my own research, it is absolutely amazing the people who have contacted me or my office

with information or stories which really relate to the topic here this morning. At this time, I want to thank the member for Mississauga North (Mr. Offer) who has provided me with an abundance of information about how this particular federal policy is affecting the region of Peel and what it is doing on behalf of its community and the refugee claimants who are residing within the boundaries of the region of Peel.

The member for Mississauga North met with the regional chairman, Frank Bean, to discuss how this was playing havoc on the social service budget of the region of Peel. I am very pleased to have with me today some of the information and data that Peel has collected in relation to its concern.

Just a couple of points here: In October alone, Peel social services paid almost \$400,000 to help more than 800 area refugee families. This was a 30 per cent increase over the previous month. The real issue here, from Peel's point of view, is that Ontario and the Ministry of Community and Social Services are picking up the bulk of that \$400,000 because of the percentage breakdown in contribution that the province makes to the GWA.

On October 6 of this year, the region of Peel passed the following resolution:

"That the Minister of Community and Social Services be requested to assume the 100 per cent cost of Refugee cases until the Refugee status is changed by the Senior Levels of Government;

"And further, that the Minister of Community and Social Services be supported in his efforts to seek time limited renewable work permits from the federal government since this would definitely speed up the process as well as allow able bodied Refugees to assume work as soon as possible, instead of relying on General Welfare Assistance;

"And further, that a copy of the report of the Acting Commissioner of Social Services, dated August 29, 1988 and entitled 'Refugees,' be sent to the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, the Ontario Municipal Social Services Association and to all area MPs and MPPs for their consideration."

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It just proves to me, as a member of the Legislature, that the region of Peel, outside of Metro, has aggressively taken a look at this issue, done the research and believes, as do we as members of this Legislature, that the inactivity of the federal government in this particular area is wrong. It is an area of concern that should be addressed immediately. The federal govern-

ment, as late as November 21 of last month, got a clear mandate from the people of Canada.

An MP in my area told me that the two biggest issues he works on are unemployment and immigration. The bulk of his constituency work is spent on those two areas. The immigration issue is growing, and the federal government's refusal to issue temporary work permits is causing all the area MPs themselves a lot of grief in trying to deal with the constituency problems that surround this particular issue.

I just want to say that with respect to the region of Peel and especially to the member for Mississauga North, who himself is involved in an area where there are many refugee claimants, he has a genuine concern—

**Mr. Wildman:** Why didn't he introduce this resolution?

**Mr. Offer:** I wanted to.

**Mr. Ballinger:** I would like to respond to the honourable member that the member for Mississauga North wanted to speak to this particular issue, but unfortunately, under private member's business, there is just not enough time in terms of the number of people who are allowed. The amount of information that I received from Peel was generated by the member for Mississauga North so that, in fact, when I was speaking, I would have an opportunity to put forth Peel's concerns, and I am doing that. I want to thank as well the chairman of the region of Peel, Frank Bean, for providing the member with the statistical information that I could include in this morning's presentation.

Just so that the members in the Legislature this morning understand that it is not only we as a government or the surrounding municipalities, let me just take a moment and read a few of the latest headlines that have been appearing in newspapers all across Ontario, more specifically in the dailies in the general Metropolitan Toronto area. I think this will really reinforce the importance of the issue and why it is absolutely important for us as a Legislature to get the federal government's attention so that it will act.

Some of the headlines, "Immigration Offices Reeling Under Flood of Refugee Claims," "Ottawa Seeks Way Out of Refugee Chaos," "Refugee Delay Swells Welfare Costs, Metro Says," "Welfare Termed Blow to Self-Esteem"—that one, I believe says it all. "Refugees Caught in Welfare Trap, Advocates Charge," "A Refugee Predicament," "Refugees Want to Work and Pay Taxes," "Processing Refugee Claims Shut Down Due to a Backlog." There is an interesting one. They shut it down due to a backlog. Is that



not the most ridiculous thing members have ever heard? The normal procedure when you have a backlog is to increase the staff to help to accommodate the process. "Backlog Leaves 15,000 Without Work Permits," "60,000 Refugees on Hold," "No Amnesty on 60,000 Refugee Claims, the Minister Says"—that is the federal minister. "No Decision Yet on Huge Refugee Backlog, the Federal Minister Says."

I do not think the federal government needs any more information or evidence than that to prove our point. I guess what we are doing in Ontario when these people come, willing, able and eager for work, all we are asking from the government of Ontario's point of view is that, in the interim, while processing these particular applications, the federal government please address the issue of temporary work permits. That is all we are asking.

If they would do that, it would give the refugees some encouragement, in landing in Canada, that they have an opportunity to work while their application for permanent status is being processed. If in fact they do not receive permanent status, then the temporary work permit would be revoked and the refugees would be asked to leave.

I think that is a fair request from Ontario's point of view. I know for a fact that the Minister of Community and Social Services, as late as January 1988, was in touch with the Honourable Barbara McDougall, asking her to address this particular issue, so that it will free up the something like \$35 million of taxpayers' money that we are spending in this particular area, as well as the contribution from all the area municipalities that are feeling this.

I know the areas surrounding Metro are all feeling this. The member for Ottawa-Rideau (Mrs. O'Neill) will be speaking and she will be outlining the concerns they have in that area, that in fact there is tremendous need for the federal government to address this very serious problem.

The scary thing is that all this money we are spending, something in the neighbourhood of \$90 million, really only represents about one third of the available refugees. What are we going to do, all three levels of government, if the other two thirds decide, for whatever reasons, that they need social assistance in the interim, that they stop living with relatives and decide the government should just take care of them while they are here?

Take that \$90 million and multiply it by three, and our general welfare costs associated with this issue will then run to \$270 million. We just

approved what I consider to be a working budget of April 1988, and people were concerned about our raising taxes in Ontario. The reason we do that is to meet the needs of the people of Ontario.

Here we have an example where we are funnelling good taxpayers' money to solve a problem on behalf of refugee claimants in Ontario that is not being addressed by the federal government. When the federal government closed down the refugee determination process, that really did play havoc with this issue.

In this particular case, I hope that the members of the Legislature will support this resolution for the main reason of drawing to the federal government's attention what it is doing and the impact its indecision is having in Ontario.

At this time I would like to reserve any future comments for the windup.

**Mr. Allen:** I rise to support the resolution of the member for Durham-York (Mr. Ballinger) which I think, on the whole, is well conceived, notwithstanding some problems that I would like to point out in regard to it.

It is certainly clear, as he claims, that the federal government has a responsibility to see that refugees who arrive on our shores and in our midst are able to take up productive work as early as they possibly can and that any impediment that we place in their way is obviously not only of short-term detriment to them, but also certainly does lead them to a view of this country with regard to government provision of service that is probably unhealthy if it is maintained for too long.

There is no question that most refugees do arrive here with a sense that they are arriving in a country where they will be able to take up productive lives, where they will be able to work, where they will be able to exercise their talents in a new way, free from the persecutions and difficulties that they have experienced elsewhere. It certainly is a proposal that I and our party would wish to support, that the federal government immediately undertake to issue temporary work permits for all refugee claimants in our midst.

**1020**

However, in saying that, I would not want to leave the impression that I thought there were not important and justifiable needs on the part of refugee claimants for social assistance. It may well be that there is at this time, because of the lack of accessibility to work permits, a major problem in funding and in amounts of dollars which are given in the direction of social assistance which might otherwise be avoided.



At the same time, I think it behooves the provincial government, first, to make certain that all refugees who do come in our midst and who come out of very difficult circumstances and often may not be able immediately to adapt to working situations, have the conditions available to them which make it possible for them to begin their lives appropriately in this new country while they are waiting for the settlement of the determination of their claimant status.

In the first instance, it seems to me that it is important to clear away some roadblocks which do exist in the area of social assistance, because at present, while it is true that refugee arrivals generally are able to claim social assistance, Ontario health insurance plan benefits and access to the schools, it is not true that all refugees are in that position. It was not until recently, for example, that all out-of-status refugees were provided with access to assistance. The Divisional Court recently made a judgement in which it determined that the immigrant status of such an arrival was not a proper barrier to access to social assistance; the barrier placed in the way of out-of-status refugees was eliminated.

But there remain in-status refugees who come, for example, as visitors, who then remain in our midst claiming refugee status, who, because they are not permanent residents, are deemed to be visitors, are deemed to be resident of another jurisdiction, do not have the ability either to claim work permits from the federal government or social assistance from this provincial administration. It seems to me that it is important for the government to clean up its act with respect to all refugee arrivals and give them that option of availability of social assistance which, as the Thomson report reminds us, should be available in Ontario on the basis of objective need and not on the basis of some other discriminatory criteria.

Second, I think the member for Durham-York might well have called attention to other provisions that refugees need in order to get on with the question of working in this province. It is not just the absence of work permits: the problem, for example, of getting access to training programs and, in the first instance, to English-as-a-second-language programs which are often necessary to take advantage of the training programs. But it is very difficult for refugees at this time to get access to training programs sponsored by the provincial government. Many cannot qualify because their English is not good enough.

The Ministry of Skills Development, for example, is very paranoid about community-based training programs, which are the only ones refugees have access to. It dislikes the necessity of the programs having to have an English-as-a-second-language component, because it claims that is the responsibility of the Ministry of Citizenship. At the same time, it is difficult for those refugees to access other offerings in the field of English as a second language. It is true, for example, that the high school programs for English as a second language are free, but they are not very effective for recently arrived immigrants, refugees in particular, unless a person has undergone a six-month intensive course which is normally offered elsewhere and most properly available through many of the college-based programs.

Refugee claimants are not eligible, however, unless they directly pay cash for the programs offered through the community college system. Even if you did have the cash, you would have to wait probably for six months before you could get into them because the waiting list is so long due to the lack of overall, sufficient support for those programs in the community colleges.

There are a lot of problems at the level of accessing training, accessing language training courses that will enhance the ability to get into the workforce, that need to be dealt with by this provincial government and should not be skirted by the member as he seeks to change the mind of the federal government with regard to this very appropriate proposal; namely, that it should be offering temporary work permits.

Quite apart from the question of access—I should not say quite apart from the question of access, but in the one area of access that the refugee claimant does have, namely, the community-based programs, he finds himself trying to access a program for which the funding from the Ministry of Citizenship and the Ministry of Culture and Communications has in fact not been keeping up with inflation—three per cent, for example, in 1988-89. That has been the pattern for the last two or three years. The result, therefore, has been a declining ability to offer programs, let alone keep up with the demands that the arrival of immigrants and refugees in our midst places upon that kind of program.

Another area, for example, that the provincial government might well attend to has to do with the whole question of access to trades and professions. We all know the innumerable barriers that even well-trained nationals from other countries have when they try to move into



trades and professions in Canada, and not least of all in Ontario.

It is true that the cabinet committee on race relations has recently hired a consultant to identify those barriers. That report was released a year ago and identified five major barriers, English proficiency being one of them. I have already referred to that and the problems around that. Evaluation of academic credentials is another. Credit for experience earned abroad is another. Retraining and examination requirements is another. Perceived discrimination, equivalencies granted to white-dominated countries, for example—all constitute a formidable array of barriers for refugee claimants in their search for work and their ability to work in our country and in our province.

This task force has reported to the provincial government, but as yet there has been no action taken upon it. Those who work with the refugees and immigrant groups in our city, in Ontario and across the province are very concerned that action must follow this report to clear up those barriers, so the member's good intentions to seek a work status for recently arrived refugee claimants need to be responded to at a number of levels. I salute him for the initiative he is taking, but obviously the undertaking has to have a broader dimension in a number of respects, and a number of those respects do demand that his government act in a number of directions that would facilitate the very work initiative that he is trying to secure for refugee claimants in Ontario.

I support this proposal with some reservations with regard to the undertakings that the provincial government might make.

**Mr. Pollock:** I would like to comment on this resolution and put some things on the record. I basically agree with the resolution. However, as the member well knows, this country has just been through a long, hard-fought election campaign and I am sure he realizes that when there is an election campaign on the go, everything basically gets put on hold. Even before the election, the minister was changed. When that takes place, it takes a certain time for that particular changeover.

I am generally surprised that there are as many unemployed people as there are. I hear on a regular basis that farmers cannot even get trained help. I have heard farm operators saying that they are going to go out of business because they cannot get skilled farm help.

1030

I am sure it does not take a lot of time to screen those who apply for refugee status. The fact that

immigration is up and there is an increased number of people wanting to come to this country will only make that backlog worse.

The resolution raises some interesting concerns that I have. I am sure all members will recall the group of people who came ashore in Newfoundland claiming to be refugees. After some investigation, however, it was disclosed that they paid a German freighter operator to take them to Canada and put them adrift in boats off the shore of Newfoundland. The same sort of situation existed when a group of Tamils came ashore in Nova Scotia. It would not be a surprise to me if there were around 900 refugees here in the greater Toronto area; however, the fact that the number is around 9,000 does raise a lot of questions about the method we use to grant these permits.

If these refugees are coming from Third World countries and they are professional people who were educated in that country, or if there are skilled labourers who are needed in that particular country, then I have some serious questions about whether we are doing those countries a disservice by allowing these individuals to claim refugee status here in Canada when their abilities could be put to use in helping to develop their own homelands. To encourage a doctor to come to Ontario, where there is approximately one doctor for every 1,000 patients, and have him or her leave a country where there is only one doctor for 10,000 to 15,000 patients just does not seem right to me.

If these refugees are coming from Cuba, for instance, should we really become involved? If they are coming from Jamaica, what direction should we take? There has been no revolution in Jamaica that they would be fleeing from. There is a basic difference between what has become known as an economic refugee and a person who is fleeing a government or a nation that is repressive. Our immigration policy must reflect this difference and must treat each of these people in a different way. However, if some of these refugees are from countries like Haiti where there is a military dictatorship, then that is a different matter.

No doubt many of these refugees are unskilled workers. We already have a problem in this country with unskilled labour, and the numbers of people who fall into that category are clearly stretching our resources in terms of what retraining programs are available.

This attitude formed the basis of the federal government's policy between 1980 and 1984 in which, in order for a relative to come to this



country, you had to prove that the job he was going to be taking could not be done by a Canadian.

The member for Durham-York should perhaps show some proof with regard to whether there is a job to be had if these refugees received a work permit. I have talked to people who have come to this country through the legitimate immigration channels and they raise the question, "Why would we not treat everyone the same?" I believe we have to face reality with these refugees and at least in some cases grant them work permits.

I have recently been in touch with the federal minister's office. He said that after January 1 they are going to be granting work permits to people who meet the basic criteria. What is going to take place as far as the roughly 60,000 to 80,000 refugees in this country are concerned has not been decided yet.

These are a few of the things that I wanted to put on the record. It is my understanding that there are over a million people who want to come to Canada next year. Right across the world, they claim that there are 100 million people who want to move someplace. With that, Mr. Speaker, thank you for a chance to speak to this resolution.

**Mrs. O'Neill:** I am very pleased to speak in support of this important resolution. I congratulate my colleague from Durham-York for bringing this serious matter to the attention of the Ontario Legislature. As a member from the Ottawa-Carleton area, I know first hand of the problems of refugee claimants in this country awaiting examination under oath.

Although the majority of refugee claimants in Ontario are currently situated in the Metropolitan Toronto area, it is a situation being experienced with increasing regularity in other centres across this province, including my own, Ottawa-Carleton. Estimates place Ottawa-Carleton as the third-largest home in this province to refugee claimants awaiting processing through the federal government. As the member for Durham-York has noted, these claimants, who are ready, willing, able and indeed eager to work and to make a valuable contribution to our society, are being denied this possibility by the bureaucracy and the political decisions made by the federal government.

With no other option available, refugee claimants are being put on welfare rolls. This is increasing the burden on the system itself, a fact which has been acknowledged in the recently released comprehensive review of the Ontario social assistance system. Ontario is, fortunately, home to many settlement organizations that offer

assistance not only to those whose refugee status has been determined, but also to refugee claimants awaiting processing by the federal government. I would like to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of these organizations in our province.

Within Ottawa-Carleton we have the Ottawa-Carleton Immigrant Services, the Catholic Immigration Centre and the Jewish Social Service Agency. I applaud the work of the individuals who assist refugee claimants in finding food and shelter, obtaining the services of interpreters and dealing with the government and its institutions.

The provincial government has been very active in supporting these settlement and support organizations through a variety of grant programs offered by the Ministry of Citizenship. Many of these community-based support organizations have been overwhelmed by demands for services from refugee claimants. In June 1987 the ministry provided special funding for the Ontario Welcome House in Toronto, totalling \$157,000, and to 13 community-based agencies, totalling \$170,000, to assist them in providing services to the large backlog of refugee claimants. A survey of community agencies early this year confirmed that a continuing need still existed and the ministry has extended this special funding.

The ultimate goal of these settlement organizations is to help refugee claimants achieve a stability in their lives. All groups dealing with refugee claimants concur, however, that this stability cannot be established for these individuals until their status is determined. This determination is simply not occurring. The weight of the existing backlog of refugee cases in our country is estimated to be in excess of 60,000 people. Unfortunately, the federal government has yet to do anything to specifically address this existing backlog, and this brings us to the reason this resolution is before this House today.

In fact, the only action the federal government has taken in this area is to adopt measures that have actually worsened the situation. In the spring of 1987 the government decided to stop issuing work permits to refugee claimants, a measure that has left some 15,000 refugees without hope of obtaining such a permit. The rationale behind this move was an attempt to ensure that refugee claimants would complete the hearing process. However, this September, the federal government decided to stop processing new refugee claims, which would determine the status of refugee claimants and allow them to work.



1040

Considering that the cancellation of work permits was done to ensure that refugee claimants would complete the hearing process, the second move of stopping the hearing of cases makes no sense to me at all.

The federal government has yet to say how they will deal with this backlog, although a new system is scheduled to come into effect on January 1, as already mentioned. A report in last Saturday's *Globe and Mail* quoted a spokesman for the federal minister of immigration as stating that after January 1 they did not even know whether the current backlog of refugees would be treated under the old or the new system of determination. Experts agree, however, that either system will not be capable of dealing with this present situation.

In the face of this indecision by the federal government, the only clear option that exists is to issue these claimants work permits until a decision is finally made regarding their status. These permits could be time-limited and renewable in order to prevent any abuse and allow for proper controls. By not issuing these work permits, the federal government is forcing willing, able people to seek social assistance.

The resolution before us this morning, along with much of the debate that has taken place, has focused on the phenomenal cost to the province in both economic and, more important, human terms. As more and more refugee claimants willing to work but denied that right are placed on the welfare rolls, the cost will continue to grow. The inaction by the federal government is creating an intolerable situation which is totally unnecessary.

I find that it is ironic, given the fact that the people of Canada received the Nansen medal in 1986 in recognition of our nation's outstanding service to the cause of refugees. The most tragic component is the human toll. The psychological repercussions of such inaction are incalculable. In essence, we are witnessing the creation of a most unfortunate situation by teaching welfare dependency to a group of individuals who are anxious to settle and become an active part of our Canadian community.

I invite members to pause for a moment and realize whom we are specifically speaking about when we talk about refugee claimants. Many of these individuals have faced persecution, hardship, imprisonment and even torture in their home countries. They have fled their countries in fear, searching for a fresh start, determined to make a better life for themselves once in Canada.

Once they are here, they are not only anxious to learn new skills and understand our culture, they also seek stability and acceptance that will help them to deal with the horror of their past situations. Instead, they are denied work in a booming economy and offered social assistance as a means to support themselves. Many of the benefits of employment, in allowing individuals to achieve acceptance and stability, are ideas that are expressed clearly and succinctly in the recent report of the Social Assistance Review Committee. Its fifth recommendation urged the federal government to issue work permits to refugee claimants while the validity of their claims is being established.

As noted in the report, newcomers to Canada face a host of cultural and linguistic barriers. The report, *Transitions*, concludes that it is essential that income security programs show sensitivity to these additional barriers to broader social participation. It seems ironic that when the government of Ontario is seriously examining the role of social assistance in our society and the underlying philosophy of that system, we are witnessing the federal government reverting to the narrow idea of the past by indefinitely placing an entire group of people on social assistance with little option or choice.

We are all aware of the findings of the SARC report. Its findings are in complete agreement with the arguments being made here this morning in support of this resolution. The investigations of the committee clearly showed that one of the most important and effective means of establishing self-sufficiency and integration into society is through employment. Indeed, the report recognized that one of the greatest barriers to full participation in a society was when people were not given the ability to assume personal responsibility to make real choices.

I challenge anyone to demonstrate how barring individuals from working and forcing them on social assistance month after month—in some cases, claimants are entering their second year—I question how this is giving them the individual responsibility to make choices and work towards fully entering our society.

Another danger of this present situation is that it is reinforcing negative stereotypes of refugees. Most refugees are highly motivated individuals, in many cases possessing needed skills, who are anxious to make a valuable contribution to our society.

In closing, may I say that Canada has a long history of showing compassion to refugees. Ontario, as the final home to more than half of the



refugees who settle in Canada, can take particular pride in the recognition of our willingness to offer assistance.

I have been pleased with the efforts of the Ministry of Community and Social Services in lobbying the federal government to immediately issue work permits to these individuals. Let us continue these efforts through today's resolution, urging the federal government to issue work permits and help alleviate this tragic problem. We must urge the federal government to put compassion before politics and grant these people the right to work.

The time for action is now. I urge all members of the Legislature to support this resolution.

**Mr. Wildman:** I too rise in support of the resolution, and I congratulate the member for Durham-York in recommending the resolution to the House. As a matter of fact, the member indicated to me that this could be regarded by some as sort of motherhood resolution, and I want to say that I do not see it that way at all. Rather, it deals with a very practical problem related to a very difficult matter facing our national government and its ramifications on the province and on municipalities in Ontario.

I certainly agree that refugees should not be kept in limbo for as long as we have found over the last few years, nor be in a situation where they are unable to make a contribution to the new society they have chosen, whereby they become a burden on the social assistance program in our country.

I am very much in support of the resolution, not just because it would be a saving to the taxpayers in municipalities across Ontario and in this province but because of the effects it might have on the refugees themselves and the feeling that they can be productive and start to make a new life here in Ontario.

I must take exception, though, to some comments made by my colleague the member for Hastings-Peterborough (Mr. Pollock). He seemed to indicate that, after all, we have just come through a federal election campaign, and everyone in this House should recognize that things are on hold during an election campaign. Surely the member is not suggesting that this refugee mess we have in this country started some time in August or September.

We have had a problem in defining what a refugee is in this country for some time. There is the question of political refugees as opposed to economic refugees. We have a large number of people in Third World countries who are living in situations that they find intolerable and from

which they wish to escape. In some cases, the situation from which they seek refuge is an economic situation and not one of political persecution. When those kinds of refugees, to use the phrase that is sometimes used, jump the queue of the regular immigration process, we have problems. Unfortunately, because of our attempts to deal with that problem in this country, we have made it more difficult for those legitimate political refugees to find refuge in this country.

I remember the horrific story a couple of years ago of the young woman from Guatemala who sought refugee status by visiting the Canadian legation in that country. She was told she could not be dealt with immediately and that she should return in three weeks. We know what happened in that three-week interval. This young woman was tortured and murdered and was unable to escape what she realized was a life-and-death situation. She lost her life simply because of the bureaucratic mess that we have in the refugee system in this country.

#### 1050

I am concerned, too, about the bias that there seems to have been historically in the Canadian immigration system, as well as in the system with which we deal with refugees. There has been a tendency in this country to move very quickly to admit refugees from Europe, and I applaud that. There has not been such swift action in admitting refugees from countries in Latin America or Asia. I wonder what the reason is for that. I think all of us should ponder that. It might be related to language, race or religion.

I also am concerned about the tendency, even if one looks just at European immigrants and refugees, to accept refugees from the Iron Curtain countries more easily than refugees or immigrants from countries that are seen to be right-wing countries. For instance, prior to the overthrow of the dictatorships in Portugal and Spain, I believe it was easier for someone who was a refugee from political persecution from the far left, the Communist countries, to gain refuge in this country than it was for a refugee who himself or herself might be a leftist seeking refuge from persecution from right-wing governments such as the Spanish or Portuguese dictatorships.

I think that kind of ideological bias in our system was another reason for the difficulties we face now. We have an enormous backlog: 60,000 refugees who need to be processed, 60,000 people who are claiming refugee status. The federal government has really no idea of how to



catch up on that backlog. We have a new system being introduced in January which should speed up the process somewhat, but it is still going to take a tremendously long time to deal with this enormous backlog.

There are 15,000 refugees who could be supporting themselves now instead of finding themselves a burden on the taxpayers of Ontario and the municipalities in which they are now living. But because of the federal government's attempt to revamp the system, they have been prohibited from obtaining work permits, with the cost to the Ontario taxpayers and also the cost to themselves in terms of their own self-esteem and self-respect.

This is not an easy area. Immigration has always been important in Canada. After all, most of us in this House, if not all of us in this House, are either immigrants ourselves or descendants of immigrants. I may be incorrect, but I do not think that there are any native members of the House. They are the only ones who could claim, I suppose, not to be immigrants in this country.

The fact is that we need immigration. We should be opening our doors to people who are persecuted in other countries not just for humanitarian reasons but also for the self-interest that we need immigration, we need people. We have always had a reputation for opening our doors to people who need refuge.

I hope we do not somehow sink into a kind of xenophobia which says that people coming to this country are somehow going to take jobs from Canadians who are already living and working in this country. The fact is that the population projections indicate that, by the year 2000, we are going to be short of labour in this country unless we have a concerted effort to attract more people to our shores.

Obviously, I am not suggesting that we should allow people to jump the queue and to avoid the legitimate immigration process. But where we have legitimate refugees, we should be facilitating their movement into this country and into our workplace. Where we have people who are seeking refugee status and whose refugee status is being questioned, we should be ensuring that while they are awaiting processing, they should be able to contribute to our society, contribute to their own welfare and not be a burden on our taxpayers.

I commend the member for introducing the resolution. I would hope it would lead the federal government to change its policy and to allow refugees who have the skills and the desire to

work and support themselves to obtain work permits.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. M. C. Ray):** The time remaining is insufficient to accommodate the member for London North (Mrs. Cunningham). The next speaker is the windup speaker, the member for Durham-York.

**Mr. Ballinger:** Mr. Speaker, how much time is left?

**The Acting Speaker:** Five minutes.

**Mr. Ballinger:** I would be willing to share that time with the member for London North.

**Mr. Mahoney:** We would rather hear Dianne, anyway.

**The Acting Speaker:** With unanimous consent, the member for London North.

**Mrs. Cunningham:** I would like to thank the honourable member for sharing his time. I think this is a resolution that he should be very proud of, and I certainly support him in his urging of the government of Canada to amend its policy immediately and issue these temporary work permits to refugee claimants.

I think the real issue here today, though, is far beyond what appears on this piece of paper. I think all of us who are involved in government have some responsibilities to work very hard on behalf of the people we represent. That is why I am complementing the member today, and I would like to take this just a step further.

We here in Ontario must be working very hard for immigrants, and this is one of the issues that is of concern to them. The Multicultural Work Group on Social Assistance has a number of other issues, and they relate directly to the Social Assistance Review Committee report. I do not have the time this morning except to put this on the record and to share it with the members who are here today.

There are a number of resolutions in that report that directly relate to the quality of life of immigrants, and I think that is what we are talking about here today. We would urge the Ontario government to be moving very quickly.

We think the ensuring of eligibility on the basis of need rather than immigration status for refugee claimants, recommendation 4, and for sponsored immigrants, recommendations 43 and 44, ought to be acted upon immediately. Although the government of Canada has its problems in getting its work done, so does the government here in Ontario have its difficulties.

Increasing ethnocultural representation at all levels of the social assistance delivery system, recommendation 140, and providing trained



interpreters to assist clients applying for social assistance, recommendation 141, or appealing decisions to the Social Assistance Review Board, recommendation 166, should be acted upon immediately.

I say that because it would be unfair to mislead the public who are listening to this debate that everyone who is applying for this status would, first of all, get the work permit, and second, be able to work; and so we must work very hard to support them so that they can, in fact, work when they get the work permit.

The last recommendations that we should be dealing with, quickly, supporting multicultural community organizations as providers of opportunity planning for employment and skills training, which directly relates to this motion today, recommendations 74 and 75; and as providers of information referral, advocacy, community education and counselling, recommendation 143 should be acted upon immediately.

I will just close by saying that certainly George Thomson expected the government to react immediately to a number of recommendations. Those I have mentioned today are just some of them. In supporting the honourable member in his resolution, I urge that he go to his cabinet and try to get action on those to help the refugees we are talking about today here in Ontario.

1100

**Mr. Ballinger:** I want to begin by thanking the members for Hamilton West (Mr. Allen), Hastings-Peterborough, Ottawa-Rideau, Algoma (Mr. Wildman) and London North, inclusive, for supporting my resolution. I wish I had some time as well to take issue with some of the things the member for Hastings-Peterborough said, but unfortunately time does not permit.

I just want to say to each and every member of the Legislature that this resolution was not intended to make light of the issue or to make fun of the federal government. It was to try and draw to their attention the seriousness of what is happening in Ontario and what it is costing this government and the municipal governments as well, which participate in a sharing of funding as it relates to general welfare assistance.

I hope each member of this Legislature supports this resolution so that the Minister of Community and Social Services can take that to Ottawa with a more unified voice on behalf of the people of Ontario as it relates to the federal government's inactivity in handling the refugee problems in Ontario.

## RURAL POSTAL SERVICES SERVICES POSTAUX RURAUX

Mr. Hampton moved resolution 47:

That, in the opinion of this House, recognizing that the mail service in the communities such as Fort Frances and Kenora and many smaller rural communities of northwestern Ontario will deteriorate due to the fact that the sorting of the mail will no longer take place in these communities, but instead be moved to a central facility, the government of Ontario should condemn Canada Post for this action, and the failure to recognize the importance of quality mail service for the rural communities and small towns of northwestern Ontario, and the government of Ontario should urge the government of Canada to halt immediately these plans to cut service and to maintain and improve rural postal services across Ontario.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. M. C. Ray):** The member will know he has 20 minutes for his presentation and may reserve any portion thereof for a windup.

**Mr. Hampton:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to reserve five minutes for the windup, if that is okay.

My resolution speaks to a question that is primarily a matter for the federal government. In my view, however, it is an issue that is most important to the small towns, villages and rural areas of Ontario, and therefore it is an issue this House should consider very seriously.

The fact is that in the modern world, a world that is overwhelmingly based upon the frequent and quick exchange of information, everyone, no matter where he lives, needs access to a high-quality and reliable postal system. Whether you reside in posh Rosedale in Toronto or a northern Ontario town like Sioux Lookout or rural route 1, Peterborough, you need to have a first-rate postal system if you are to participate meaningfully in our society.

Twenty years ago, even 10 years ago, even five years ago, it used to be the case that no matter where you lived in Ontario, the postal service you received was a good one. People who lived in the rural areas of my constituency, for example, one of the farthest away from the metropolis of Toronto, benefited from a postal service that was generally equal to the postal service enjoyed by Torontonians, or for that matter Hamiltonians. Each rural hamlet had its own small post office and farm areas had frequent rural route delivery. All the services that would be available from a post office in



downtown Toronto were generally available from the small rural post office as well.

Sadly, that is not the situation in Ontario today, because over the past five years Canada Post has turned much of rural Ontario and many of the small towns of Ontario into second-class and third-class communities in terms of their postal service. In effect, Canada Post has eliminated the principle of equal service and fairness and put in its place the principle of, "Let's make a profit no matter who we hurt and what we destroy in the process."

Let me give some examples of the kinds of situations that are occurring. Last spring, for example, the member for Markham (Mr. Cousens) introduced a resolution dealing with supermailboxes. It is quite a serious resolution; it is quite a serious matter. I understand that because I visited some communities that now have to deal with supermailboxes.

But I had to smile when he addressed the difficulties some people were experiencing, having to drive two or three blocks to pick up their mail. In my communities and in other communities across northern and rural Ontario, I know of people who are now driving 35 miles one way to pick up their mail.

The sad part is that many of these people are elderly and retired folks, many of them people who cannot afford to purchase a four-by-four or some other type of vehicle that will get you across the highway or down the country road in the middle of winter on every day you need to get there to pick up your mail or to get something in the mail. There exists out there in much of rural Ontario a serious hardship now in terms of getting access to adequate mail service.

Let me give another example. For people who are still served by a small rural post office, those who do not have to drive the 35 miles, in many cases the hours of operation of the rural post office have been cut.

At one time, if you were a farmer, a logger, a fishing guide or a commercial fisherman and you put in a long workday, you could still find some time during the day to make it to the post office to buy your money order, to pick up the kind of information that was available at your post office, perhaps in terms of tax forms or a passport application. There were all kinds of services that were freely and consistently available through the rural post office which you used to be able to access between the hours of eight in the morning and any time up to, sometimes, six in the evening.

Now many of these post offices have reduced hours. If you cannot get there during the two and a half to three hours it is open in the morning or perhaps the two and a half or three hours it is open in the afternoon—in some cases it is not open in the afternoon at all—then you cannot access the service. That is happening in many rural areas as well.

In addition, when you have this kind of deterioration in the service—reduced rural routes, elimination of rural routes, reduced hours of the small rural post office in a hamlet or the elimination of the small rural post office—you find that for many people who live in the more remote parts of our province or in the rural areas of our province, the time taken for delivery of the mail is unbelievable.

I want to give a practical example that has to do with the Minister of Labour (Mr. Sorbara) and the Workers' Compensation Board. A contractor in my constituency was told he had to pay his assessment to cover his employees for workers' compensation by such and such a date. The WCB said, "We must receive this by such-and-such a date."

After watching the mail go back and forth and looking at the postmarks on some letters, we calculated that to be sure of delivery he might have to mail the thing three weeks before it was due in order to get it to the Workers' Compensation Board on time.

# 1110

When we presented that argument to the Minister of Labour, he said that in this case a penalty was assessed on the individual because he was not able to get his payment to the Workers' Compensation Board on time. We took it to the Minister of Labour and he said: "I have to agree with you. There's an unfair penalty here. If the fellow lived in Toronto, he could probably put it in the mailbox the day before and it would likely be assured of delivery. In your case, having to mail it three weeks in advance is a penalty that the contractor, the entrepreneur, has no control over, so we will rescind the penalty amount that has been assessed by the Workers' Compensation Board."

That is the situation many, many communities in rural Ontario, in small-town Ontario and in the remote parts of Ontario face because of the reduced type of postal system we have to deal with. Those facts, in terms of elimination of rural routes, reduced service on rural routes, elimination of rural post offices or reduced hours in rural post offices, are just the beginning. If you look ahead to what Canada Post is planning in the

future, the repercussions may be even more serious.

One of the determinants of how quickly your mail is sorted, gets into the mainstream of the postal system and goes from one part of Ontario to another part of Ontario or from one part of Canada to another part of Canada, or is shipped internationally, is how soon your mail can get into a postal sorting facility. Only when it gets into a postal sorting facility can it then be injected in the mainstream and move very quickly.

The next order of Canada Post reforms, if you want to call them that, is to reduce many of the regional postal sorting facilities we have across Ontario.

**Mr. Wildman:** This is not reformist; it's revanchist.

**Mr. Hampton:** I can only agree with the member for Algoma. Because he has many rural routes and many rural areas in his riding, I know he is experiencing many of the same situations, many of the same hardships I have found.

For example, the situation I am best acquainted with is, again, the situation in northwestern Ontario where Canada Post has quietly announced—I say quietly because it does not want this to become widely known too quickly—that it will shut down the postal sorting facilities in main communities like Kenora—I see the member for Kenora (Mr. Miclash) is here—or Fort Frances and will centralize them.

They are not specific about where they are going to centralize them. Originally they said, "We'll just move it to the next small town." That next small town might be Dryden, for example. But if you look further ahead at their plans, they start talking about even further centralization: "Let's move it out of northwestern Ontario altogether and move it to Winnipeg," or, "Let's move it to Thunder Bay," or, "Let's move it all the way to Sudbury."

What that kind of situation means is that for someone who wants to receive mail in a rural area, a small hamlet or indeed a small town of 10,000 people, or someone who wants to send mail from those kinds of areas, it is going to take even longer for the mail to be picked up, get to the distribution centre, get sorted at the distribution centre and then get injected into the main postal system. What looks to be happening in the near future is that the postal situation, the postal service for much of rural Ontario and small-town Ontario is going to deteriorate even further.

I have heard some people say: "It's only the post; it's only the mail. Don't worry about it. There can't be that many repercussions if it takes

two weeks or"—as I pointed out—"three weeks to get your mail rather than two or three days. The point is that for many of these smaller towns and rural communities, the repercussions are very serious.

We talk a lot in this House about trying to increase economic development in eastern Ontario, in northern Ontario and in rural southwestern Ontario, but you cannot get any type of small business person or entrepreneur to move to an area if the postal service is so inadequate, if it is so slow that you are going to have problems in terms of marketing your product or exchanging information.

There is a real economic repercussion for all of these communities, and there is a social repercussion as well. I come from a postal family. My grandmother was a postmaster in rural Ontario.

**Mr. Villeneuve:** How did you become a lawyer?

**Mr. Hampton:** My grandmother instructed me that there was no future in the post office, so I had better find something else to do.

As a young child, one of the things I experienced was the fact that the small rural post office is the social centre for many small towns, for many hamlets and for many rural areas in Ontario. It is the place where people come to pick up their passport application, to ask the postmaster to explain how to fill it out. It is the place where people come to pick up their tax form if for some reason it does not arrive in the mail. It is the place where people come to inquire: "How do I apply for my pension cheque? Do you know anything about unemployment insurance? Can you direct me? Who should I talk to in these things?"

The post office in rural Ontario, in the most remote parts of Ontario and the smaller communities of Ontario provides a service that holds the community together and gives the community its livelihood, so the repercussions from these kinds of cuts are very serious.

I say to the other members in the House that if we are serious about promoting better economic development in northern Ontario or rural eastern Ontario or rural southwestern Ontario, if we are serious about a better type of social fabric in these communities and making them more stable, then this is an issue that goes to the centre of those kinds of concerns.

Just to give an illustration, when I decided to put this resolution before the House, I wrote to the communities in my constituency and asked them to support the resolution. To a one, they have written back and said, "We absolutely



endorse your resolution," whether they are small towns or rural villages.

The township of Atikokan, the town of Fort Frances, the township of Chapple, the town of Kenora, the townships of Morson, Blue, Worthington, McCrosson, Tovell, Rainy River, Atwood—these are all rural communities or small towns that depend upon a good and consistent postal service.

I ask members of the House to consider how important it is to promote economic and social development in the rural parts of our province, in the northern parts of our province and in the most remote parts of our province. If they think promoting a more stable economy and a more stable social fabric in those communities is important, then I ask them to support this resolution, because I think we have to use every means possible to convince Canada Post that what it is doing is not just reducing a few hours of postal service; it is cutting to the core of many of these rural communities.

1120

**M. Villeneuve:** Il me fait plaisir de participer au débat sur le projet de loi proposé par le député de Rainy River (M. Hampton), projet de loi qui touche de près les gens de la circonscription que je représente et qui touche, j'en suis certain, Monsieur le Président, les gens qui demeurent dans la circonscription voisine que vous représentez.

It is a pleasure to participate and to support the motion of the member for Rainy River (Mr. Hampton) regarding problems that could be occurring within the postal system.

First, might I say that I represent a very rural area, as you do, Mr. Speaker, one that has some 40 rural post offices. We have no house-to-house mail delivery in any of our communities, the communities that are within the riding that I represent. My metropolis of Alexandria does not have house-to-house delivery, nor does my second-largest town, which is Kemptville. It does not have house-to-house delivery, and certainly Morrisburg, Winchester, Chesterville, and all of those small rural farming agricultural communities do not have house-to-house delivery. However, we do have an excellent rural post office delivery, five days a week, and I, on the farm where I reside, am very fortunate to have the mail delivered in the mailbox at the road on a daily basis, Monday to Friday inclusive.

**Hon. Mr. Mancini:** Special service.

**Mr. Villeneuve:** No, it is not a special service at all. It is available to all within the 23 rural municipalities that I represent. But some of the

small towns, many of which are in the riding that I represent, do not have house-to-house delivery, and the residents do go pick up their mail on a daily basis, including Saturday morning till noon.

I do not believe the real crux of the problem is with rural post offices, as was well explained by the Canadian Postmasters and Assistants Association to all caucuses in this Legislature in the last 18 months. I am a little surprised and disappointed that the member for Rainy River did not put his finger on a certain union called the Canadian Union of Postal Workers. They are quite well paid and if, indeed—

**Mr. Wildman:** They do not run rural post offices. What a silly argument.

**Mr. Villeneuve:** I notice I touched a small nerve here with my colleague the member for Algoma. He somehow realizes that some of the postal problems are stemming from the fact that there is a very strong union in place. A gentleman called Jean-Claude Parrot has a great deal to do with how things happen in the post office.

I would like the member for Rainy River to comment on where we should be trying to rectify some of the problems, because I firmly believe that the post office should be a paying proposition; in other words, the expenditures incurred should be covered by the consumers who use the service. I think that is important. I am sure that if we added up the total expenditures on the 40 rural post offices that service the riding I represent, those rural post offices are not a big drain on the total budget of Canada Post. I am quite assured that if we were to look into the ivory towers of Canada Post and into the highly paid unionized people who work at Canada Post, it would be interesting to see just how the balance sheet really comes out.

I can tell members that in the home town where I have my constituency riding, called Moose Creek, if I mail certain items of correspondence and it has to go through a central depot in Ottawa, yes, we do have quite a time lapse. If it goes directly from, say, Moose Creek to Maxville, Apple Hill, Morewood or Chesterville, then there is no problem. But quite often, and I am not sure how it happens, it has to go to Ottawa, and that is when we run into a major problem. I think we have a number of areas that we should be looking at if we are going to streamline Canada Post and certainly the rural post offices are not the first place to start.

I assure members that all of the postmasters and postmistresses whom I know within the 40 post offices that service the area I represent are



very dedicated people indeed. I reaffirm the fact that if the dollars in and the dollars out were considered, those rural post offices would not be the ones that are causing the red ink at Canada Post.

I cannot help but touch on the rural mail delivery. This is done by a contractor, someone who bids every three or every five years and has a total number of kilometres and a total number of stops. It is done on a contractual basis.

I suggest to you that the federal government and Canada Post should also look at that in the urban areas. I firmly believe we have contractors who could do the job with considerably more efficiency than some of the members of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers are doing it. Without being anti-union and without being a union-basher, I bring to the fore and I would compare what a mailman in the city earns with the salary being earned by someone who operates a small, rural post office such as the 40 that are within the riding that I represent.

In closing, I support the member for Rainy River's private member's motion. I believe he has brought to the fore a problem, which may or may not be corrected, with the very strong union representation that we have within Canada Post, and I think we have to address more than just what is covered in the member for Rainy River's private motion this morning.

**Mr. Miclash:** Let me begin by saying that I stand to speak in favour of and support the member for Rainy River's resolution. Being from small-town northern Ontario as well, I share the concerns of my colleague. I know what postal services mean to me and to my constituents.

As in the other small-town areas and ridings in northern Ontario, my largest community of Kenora has a population of 10,000 and the remainder of the communities run at less than that. They all depend very heavily on their local postal services. We know how important these services are to them and to us in the north.

As the member mentioned earlier, the government of Ontario at the present time knows the importance of servicing the communities of the north. We try to service the smaller communities, the small towns of the north, through our Northern Development offices, and we know what the northern communities, especially throughout the northeastern and northwestern parts of Ontario, give back to this province, and not only this province but also this nation as a whole, in terms of their mining industry, their forestry industry and their tourism. We know that

the spreading of our provincial services is very important throughout these areas and we know that the spreading of federal services such as the post is very important as well.

How can we stand by and watch the federal government erode one of the most essential services in our smaller communities of northern Ontario—that is, the postal service?

Together we have made Canada a country where we have agreed to give ourselves certain services. I will give some examples: fire, police, defence and, more recently, health services. We do not expect these essential services to make a profit. A federal post office system for all Canadians, no matter where they live, is, I believe, one such service.

Spinoffs from the raw materials from the northern part of the province, as I have mentioned, contribute greatly to the economic contributions of the nation. In return, our federal government wants to cut back on such an essential service. This does not sit well with me or my constituents in rural Ontario.

The federal government is failing to recognize the importance of quality mail service for the rural communities and small towns of northern Ontario by refuting that rural post offices are a part of an extensive network. They help each other and their communities, offering knowledgeable, reliable services. The member for Rainy River referred to some of the services that they do offer our constituents, services that are very important and that people in our small towns in northern Ontario rely on.

They also contribute to the economic viability of our communities. They provide essential support for our businesses and are an incentive for new businesses that want to establish in the areas of small towns. As one contractor has put it, no business wants to come to a town where there is no post office.

In a country as vast in its geographical scope as Canada is, the importance of effective mail delivery cannot be underestimated. Yet again Canada Post has demonstrated a convoluted sense of purpose, putting profit before service, despite the fact that legislation creating the crown corporation provided clear instructions to post office management to place service before financial self-sufficiency.

**1130**

Let me refer to a quote. "The Progressive Conservative Party feels that Canada Post's current program of rapid debt reduction is unrealistic and is the underlying cause of the problems with regard to both declining postal



services and ventures into ill-conceived schemes to generate greater revenues. I can assure you that restoring the quality of service will be our top priority with Canada Post. Our party is also committed to rebuilding the economy in rural parts of Canada."

Yes, that is a quote from August 1984 when the then Leader of the Opposition, Brian Mulroney, was suggesting that restoring the quality of service would be a top priority for his government.

We have seen and will see this government in operation. Is this just another lost promise of our federal government? Let me quote the opinion of the standing committee on government operations in Ottawa back in March 1987. It suggested, "Canada Post is not going to solve its physical problems by closing rural postal service."

However, we now have a federal government that is telling us that it plans to remove mail sorting from the communities to a central facility. This promises to lead to a further erosion in the quality of services that it provides to us in northern Ontario, small-town Ontario. Canada Post justifies central sorting by saying that it will lead to more efficient service. I have to agree with the previous speakers that I do not believe so. This is the same crown corporation that told us supermailboxes would be more convenient to the customer. We know what a fiasco that turned out to be.

To add insult to injury, Canada Post is steamrolling its plan into action without listening to adequate input, without engaging in any kind of consultative process and without paying heed to our citizens' concerns. Is this the expected behaviour of a crown corporation in a democratic society? The Conservative government's obsession with profit making at the expense of essential services to Canadian taxpayers, especially those in rural Canada, is totally unfair.

Mail service, as the previous members have mentioned, is a vital means of communication for us in rural Ontario and for all Canadians. But it is especially true for those of us who depend so much on it in our small communities throughout the rural ridings of this province. It is also important as an affordable and personal means of communication. We know the costs of long-distance telephone charges at the present time. Most of those are unreachable for many of our citizens.

Canada Post gives a service to us that we rely on. They feel that by closing rural post offices they will save money to help reduce their deficit.

Some rural post offices, believe it or not, are profitable. But that is not the point. Canada would never work as a nation if everything were reduced to dollars and cents. Rural Canadians do not count the cost of their contribution to urban services like hospitals and transit systems, but they do expect to be treated fairly and equally with their mail service.

While it is obvious that Canada Post must act to remove its deficit, it might consider the example of postal systems that provide ways of increasing and expanding revenue through revenue-generating services. I will give the examples of both Australia and Britain where the post offices offer a great diversity of services that produce revenue. For example, the British Post Office offers 200 counter transactions. The revenues from those services make up 20 per cent of their total revenue. Australia, as well, receives considerable profits from special counter services.

Canada Post might be well advised to take a look at these systems and maybe streamline its system to help the plagued inefficiencies and delays that it presently has. Canadians are in favour of improved services before profits. Before Canada Post makes a decision that manifests the inverse of its priorities, it might take the time to think and look at the needs of the public it is serving.

The purpose of a crown corporation is to serve a role in the national interest. Service to people in urban centres and rural communities should never take second place to a bottom line. This is not to give Canada Post a blank cheque to run a deficit, but let us look at serious ways of improving service or cutting costs, better than the quick-fix solutions it is looking at right now.

In the long run, these quick-fix solutions will fail. It seems that Canada Post not only is making it more difficult to receive mail but, as well, it is making it more difficult to send mail. Since 1984, Canada Post has cut back on the number of mailboxes, making access difficult for seniors, disabled individuals and anyone who has difficulty getting around.

Mr. Speaker, did you know that 5,221 federally operated rural post offices in Canada are slated to be closed, amalgamated or privatized over a 10-year period? This is according to Canada Post's 1986 corporate plan. Of these, over half—and I must stress this—are located in the rural areas of Canada, areas of 5,000 people or less. Again, I go back to Mr. Mulroney's promise to restore the quality of service as a top



priority. This was the plan that I referred to earlier.

I thank the member for Rainy River for bringing this most important issue in his resolution to us and I definitely support him, as part of rural Ontario.

**Mr. Wildman:** I rise to support the resolution presented by my colleague the member for Rainy River and I want to congratulate him in his attempt here to make one of the first moves in this House to try to defend rural Ontario from the attack on it by the mandarins in Canada Post and in Ottawa serving their Tory masters. I cannot understand how a party in this country that claims to speak for rural Ontario, rural Quebec and the rural Prairies can countenance a policy which is designed to tear the hearts out of the small towns across this country.

One of the previous speakers said he believed that Canada Post was swimming in red ink and should break even. It is not acceptable to rural Ontario that we should be made the sacrificial lamb to some view that we should in some way be making a profit out of the post office.

When we mail a letter from my office here at Queen's Park, it takes, on average, one week to get to Sault Ste. Marie. Then, of course, it has to be sorted and go to the rest of my constituency. Some people would attack Canada Post by saying, "How can it be that we have such a deterioration of service?" I suggest the problem is not one of the pay that people who work in the post office get, but one of the amount of junk mail that Canada Post has to deal with.

**Mr. Black:** Your householder.

**Mr. Wildman:** I have not sent out a householder this year, but I know a lot of other members do send out householders and I suppose they might be considered to be junk.

The fact is that many people will compare Canada Post service with courier services that are running in competition with Canada Post. They say, "Look, we can send a letter by courier service and it will be delivered the next day." The question is how much you are paying to deliver a letter by courier overnight when in actual fact it takes about two days from the Sault to Toronto even though they claim overnight service. How much are you paying to get it here when you consider that a courier service not only is charging a great deal more—10 times as much, at least, for first-class mail—but also does not have to carry any of the so-called junk mail?

The fact is that we have a tremendous amount of mail to be processed by Canada Post in a country that is as wide and sparsely populated as

ours, and to suggest that this kind of an operation should be profit-making or, frankly, even should break even, is to misunderstand the necessity of a good postal service for our economy as a whole, and particularly for rural and small-town Ontario.

**1140**

As my colleague the member for Rainy River indicated, in many rural communities the post office is the centre of the community. People congregate at the post office to pick up their mail if there is no door-to-door service, as there is not in most small towns. It is a meeting place that attracts people and serves as the heart of the community. The closure of many rural post offices in these small towns in some cases will mean the end of that community as a community. Yet the Conservative government in Ottawa is intent on making rural and small-town Ontario and Canada pay for its misguided approach to the whole postal service.

In my constituency there are some ridiculous situations with regard to post office service. White River, which is at the northwest corner of Algoma riding, is approximately 60 miles from Wawa. If a person mails a letter from White River to Wawa, it does not go the 60 miles from White River to Wawa; it goes from White River, through Wawa, to Sault Ste. Marie, approximately 200 miles. It is sorted in Sault Ste. Marie and then it is sent 140 miles north, back to Wawa.

This is all done in the name of efficiency. This is done because they want to have a central sorting mechanism similar to that which the member for Rainy River is talking about in the northwest.

It used to be even worse. It did not just go from White River to Sault Ste. Marie to be sorted and then back to Wawa; the letter used to go from White River to Sudbury. They have improved it a little; they have moved it from Sudbury to Sault Ste. Marie, but it is just plain silly. It means a deteriorating service for the small communities at a time when we are having to pay more for this service, even though I admit the cost of the stamp does not pay for the cost of the operation at all.

In some of the very small railroad communities in northern Algoma, we have a really serious situation with regard to the postal service. There used to be postal service six days a week at one time. Now, in Oba, for instance, which is at the junction of the Canadian National Railway line and the Algoma Central Railway line, if they are lucky they get their mail three times a week, because it comes from Sudbury or Capreol by train. Last year the post office threatened to cut it



to two days a week, again all in the name of saving money. These communities are very isolated as it is. To have these kinds of cuts in service is going to isolate them even more.

I know it is tempting in this kind of debate to use the Canadian Union of Postal Workers, the union that serves the large urban postal service, as a whipping boy. CUPW is not a very popular organization in this country. I suppose it was tempting for the member for Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry (Mr. Villeneuve) to do a little union-bashing in his speech.

I submit that this resolution does not deal with CUPW, this resolution deals with a commitment on the part of the Conservative government in Ottawa to maintain postal services in rural, small-town and northern Ontario. The fact is that we do not have that commitment from the Conservative government in Ottawa. The Conservative government in Ottawa has said that it intends to consolidate the services even more, to cut the services even more and to charge more at the same time. We are getting less and less service and we are having to pay more for it. The postal service is an essential service to the rural communities of Canada, as it is to the whole country. What I am submitting in my remarks is that it is even more essential in small, rural Ontario towns than it is in a place like Metro.

I believe that we should be supporting this resolution. I supported the resolution presented against the supermailboxes by one of the Conservative members, and I also had a resolution in Orders and Notices some time ago about preserving rural post offices, so I am obviously in favour of this resolution. I think, though, that it is not acceptable for the Conservative members or any other members in this House to try to argue that the postal service in rural Ontario is suffering because of union activities in the cities. That is so ridiculous.

The point is that it is suffering because we have a government in Ottawa that is not interested in improving the postal service, that is interested only in attacking the postal service and is going to make rural Ontario, small-town Ontario and small-town Canada pay for its inability to make the postal system work in the black.

**Mr. Speaker:** The member's time has now expired.

**Mr. Wildman:** It should not be forcing it to work in the black; it should be providing an essential service.

**Mr. Speaker:** The member for Wellington, for up to nine minutes.

**Mr. J. M. Johnson:** First of all, I would like to express my support for the resolution, so there will not be too much heckling from the right.

**Mr. Villeneuve:** No, from the left.

**Mr. J. M. Johnson:** Nor from the left. Then I would like to point out a couple of things that concern me.

In today's private members' business we have two private members' resolutions, and both of them deal with issues pertaining to the federal government. This assembly is suggesting what the federal government should be doing to improve the life of Ontario residents.

Maybe there is a misunderstanding, but I thought about a year ago there was a provincial election and there was a bunch of Liberals elected and they formed a government. I thought they had some responsibility to the citizens of Ontario to do something. Surely private members' business should be dealing with what this government and what this assembly can be doing to help improve the services of the citizens of Ontario.

It is great to fire shots at the federal government, and before the federal election, that was quite reasonable and understandable. But since that federal election is now over, could we not concentrate and see if this Legislature could deal with issues we can handle within this assembly?

Having said that, I will now move on to the main part of the resolution and say that I do support the resolution presented by the member for Rainy River. It is a good resolution, but it could be better. The member makes mention of the fact that the mail service in communities such as Fort Frances, Kenora and many smaller rural communities of northwestern Ontario will deteriorate because of the declining mail service.

I would like to see the resolution expanded to take in all of rural Ontario, because in my part of the province, as well as that of the members from northwestern Ontario, we are concerned about any decline in mail service. Some of the urban members have spoken on different occasions about the concern they have with supermailboxes, I think they call them. In rural Ontario that is basically what we have, only we call them small post offices. People are usually quite glad to have the services of those small post offices, because it gives them an opportunity at least to pick up their mail when they do want to and not to depend on some service that may or may not materialize.

Of all the communities that I represent, only one municipality does have door-to-door mail

service similar to what the urban members expect, and most of our people, as I mentioned earlier, are very pleased to accept the services provided by the small post office. One thing we do not want to see is curtailment of that service or even any decline in the services provided by those small post offices, or the rural delivery in some cases.

**1150**

It has been pointed out by the member for Rainy River—one of the main concerns I would support him on—that if we are to attract industrial or commercial development into northern Ontario, or indeed, into rural Ontario, we need all the services that are available, certainly not any decline in the services we now have, such as the postal service.

The smaller municipalities lack a lot of the advantages they have in the cities. That is why so many of the industries end up coming to the likes of Metro Toronto, creating further problems: housing, sewage, garbage, all types of pollution, traffic. These industries would be well advised to take a look at northern Ontario, eastern Ontario and western Ontario. They could find a much better place to set up their business, a quality workforce and, one hopes, the services they need to carry on.

I would like to add one other thought, and that would be to support the member for Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry and his reference to the fact that possibly the unions do have some say in the operation of the post office. Maybe they do not seem to feel they are directly involved, but I think they are very directly involved. I think the comments made by my colleague sitting to my right were very pertinent.

I will not repeat them except to say that in Queen's Park, our mail service is not the best. I have raised this on occasion with the Minister of Government Services (Mr. Patten). I have pointed out that sometimes it takes two weeks, three weeks and even four weeks to receive a letter from my riding, which is only 50 miles to 100 miles from Queen's Park. In three weeks to four weeks, we could send it by pony express. In fact, many of my constituents have thought of the possibility of training pigeons.

I hope they do not have to resort to pigeons or pony express or something of this nature, but I do think there is something to be desired in the quality of mail service we are experiencing in Queen's Park. I assume it is the same in this jurisdiction, because sometimes the ministers take two months, three months, four months to respond to a letter.

I see one of the ministers coming in now who is very prompt to respond to his letters.

**Mr. Villeneuve:** A very lonely minister at that.

**Mr. J. M. Johnson:** A very lonely minister. I think the members do have a responsibility to respond to their constituents as soon as possible. I try to respond within a day or two of receiving my mail. Unfortunately, as I mentioned, that sometimes is two weeks or three weeks. I am not sure that is quite addressing the resolution, but perhaps the resolution could be expanded to improve all mail services by whatever means.

I will close by simply saying that I do support the resolution of the member for Rainy River. I do encourage all members to support it as well, and I hope we can have a further resolution dealing with improving something in this province relating to this government.

**Mr. Speaker:** There is still a minute and a half. The member for Grey for a minute and a half.

**Mr. Lipsett:** It is a pleasure for me to have an opportunity for a brief second or two also to support this resolution this morning by the member for Rainy River.

I would like also to address the part of the resolution that states in the last couple of lines that it is applicable to all rural postal service across Ontario. Rumours of cutbacks per week of rural delivery, replacement of the present end-of-lane service and closing of rural post offices are all of concern to each and every one and do not enhance or improve the service.

We have adjusted to mail delivery loss on Saturdays but not without inconvenience. Any further reduction in that service would not be in our best interest, especially for subscribers to the daily newspapers. The Saturday paper is of very little use to them on Monday and even less so, if Monday is a holiday, on Tuesday. We get frustrations from the subscribers as well as from the people who produce the newspapers.

I think that today we take pride in our high-tech, instantaneous global communication system, but when it comes to rural mail delivery, it could be improved. I therefore support the resolution.

**Mr. Speaker:** The member for Rainy River reserved three and three quarters minutes, which he may wish to use now.

**Mr. Hampton:** Let me begin by thanking all members for their support on this resolution. It was very much appreciated.



**Mr. Ballinger:** We haven't voted yet.

**Mr. Hampton:** Well, all those members who have so far spoken. As for the member for Durham-York (Mr. Ballinger), he should remember that we will be voting on his resolution as well this morning.

Let me respond to some of the comments that have been made, and first of all, to my Conservative colleagues and some of the comments they have made. The suggestion was made, in terms of the postal service, that everybody should pay his own way or that the postal service has to turn a profit. Let me say this: I think anyone can make a profit shipping mail from Toronto to Montreal, Montreal to Ottawa, Toronto to Vancouver, Edmonton to Calgary or even, for that matter, London or Windsor to Toronto. There are such volumes of mail and such large concentrations of population that there is no problem. You can make money off that.

The theory used to be that this was one community and that whether you lived in a rural area or an urban area, a metropolitan area or a remote area, there were some services that should be relatively equally available; there should be some equality of service. That is what I am asking for in this bill, the return to the equality of service. If the post office really is concerned about breaking even or reducing its debt, I suggest that it is going about it in the wrong way. What it is doing is trying to cut losses by cutting service and cutting employees, and that is going to hurt those communities that can afford it the least, small-town and rural Ontario.

What Canada Post ought to be doing—and I thank the member for Kenora for talking about this briefly—is trying to increase the revenue by increasing its service and the variety of service it offers across Canada, but certainly across Ontario.

The second thing I want to say is that I do not care who the employees are at Canada Post; they are only employees and they do not make the managerial decisions. I get really fed up when I hear some people say, "If we could only crack the whip on those civil servants." I hear it all the time in my constituency. The guy who is a civil servant at the bottom of the rung does not make

any managerial decisions. Somebody says to him, "You do this, you do that and you get to work on time." I think it is the same in Canada Post.

It matters not to me if you are a member of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers, you are a member of the letter carriers' union or you are from the postmasters' association. You do not make the orders, you do not give the marching orders and you do not make the decisions; you simply follow the rules. To blame some postal worker in CUPW who is making \$35,000 a year, to say that it is because he or she is making \$35,000 a year that some other part of the postal service is suffering, does not make any sense to me.

I want to say something, finally, about the relevancy of this resolution. When some of the Conservative members suggest that this is not an issue that we should be dealing with here, I want to say only this: They have not adjusted to opposition yet. One of the things you realize when you are in opposition is that you bring pressure to bear wherever you can. That is the idea behind this resolution, to bring pressure to bear on the powers that be. I think we in this province can exert some pressure.

**Mr. Speaker:** The member's time has expired.

**Mr. Hampton:** I thank all members who spoke in favour of the resolution.

**Mr. Speaker:** That completes the allotted time for dealing with private members' public business and particularly with ballot items 45 and 46.

#### REFUGEE CLAIMANTS

**Mr. Speaker:** Mr. Ballinger has moved resolution 52.

Motion agreed to.

#### RURAL POSTAL SERVICES

**Mr. Speaker:** Mr. Hampton has moved resolution 47.

Motion agreed to.

The House recessed at 12:02 p.m.

## AFTERNOON SITTING

The House resumed at 1:30 p.m.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

## AMBULANCE SERVICES

**Mr. McCague:** We have had an opportunity to speak to the Minister of Health (Mrs. Caplan) during her estimates, with very few answers. One of the main subjects being discussed is ambulance services. Most of us have all types of ambulance services in our areas.

I want to bring to the attention of the minister the situation in Wasaga Beach where the emergency services committee of council points out that the staff there are about \$1 an hour behind the wage levels of other services in the province. Yet the minister refuses to acknowledge that, or at least if she does acknowledge it, refuses to fund it. It is a municipally run service where they do not charge up their administrative fees. I think the minister is getting a bargain and I would just ask you, Mr. Speaker, to pass on to her that we need a little more money in that area.

CFOS/CFPS-SUN TIMES  
CHRISTMAS FUND

**Mr. Lipsett:** I rise today to recognize the organizers and performers of and contributors to the CFOS/CFPS-Sun Times Christmas Fund broadcast. This year's broadcast on Sunday will receive pledges from the listening audience, many accompanied by a request to have some local talent sing, play an instrument or recite an appropriate poem.

This year's broadcast will be the 49th successive event to raise money for the Save the Children-Canada Fund, the Grey-Bruce Regional Health Centre and five county homes for seniors in the counties of Grey and Bruce. Last year, \$24,606.83 was raised, of which \$2,000 went to the paediatric ward of the hospital, \$2,000 to the homes for seniors and the remainder to the Save the Children fund. This year's distribution of funds will be proportionately the same.

I would like to acknowledge in this House the efforts and dedication over the years of the management and staff of the radio station and the Sun Times. I would also like to recognize and thank the people of Grey-Bruce area for their caring and generosity towards this worthy cause.

## WORLD A.I.D.S. DAY

**Mr. Eves:** I rise today to comment on World AIDS Day. The World Health Organization has

designated today as the day to publicize the worldwide fight against the acquired immune deficiency syndrome epidemic. There have been some remarkable efforts in this fight, especially with respect to stopping the spread of the disease.

Evidence from around the world shows that education programs can result in behavioural change. I am sorry to say, however, that news from the research front is not as promising. It is estimated that it will be at least another five to 10 years before a vaccine against AIDS is developed. It was about seven years ago when we first started hearing about this disease, and since that time there have been 861 reported cases of AIDS in Ontario, 489 in Toronto alone. Worldwide, there have been over 124,000 cases.

The World Health Organization predicts that by 1991 there will be 100 million people with the disease. This is particularly important in light of the Queen's University study which revealed that more and more teenagers are engaging in sexual activity without knowing the risks. It is also important that we continue to educate the public about how the disease is spread, so that we do not create fear of those people with AIDS.

The Progressive Conservative caucus encourages the government to continue and strengthen its AIDS education campaign. We also hope that this government improves its support for research for a cure and new and innovative ways to treat the disease. We would again like to remind the government and the Minister of Health (Mrs. Caplan) with respect to a needle exchange program, and for that matter providing needles to all those in need, especially diabetics.

## CONSERVATION AUTHORITIES

**Mr. Offer:** On June 29, 1988, the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Kerrio) tabled a report entitled A Review of the Conservation Authorities Program. This report was received and accepted by the Association of Conservation Authorities of Ontario with this comment: "The report is a good start in dealing with a wide range of complex issues."

The Credit Valley Conservation Authority is one of 38 conservation authorities across our great province which belong to ACAO. The CVCA, established in 1954, serves a number of communities, including my own, and is responsible for the watershed of the Credit River, which spans the townships of Mono, Orangeville and



East Garafraxa and includes the regional municipalities of Halton and Peel to Lake Ontario.

Recently, the ACAO prepared a response to the report interested in reforming conservation authorities across our province. The Credit Valley Conservation Authority supports ACAO's comments in their entirety. Both the CVCA and the ACAO have commended the Minister of Natural Resources for the opportunity to have real input into this very important topic which will shape the future of all conservation authorities in Ontario. The purpose of a single, united response by the ACAO on behalf of all Ontario conservation authorities is to ensure that conservation authorities receive the necessary responsibilities, funding and opportunities.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you. That completes the allotted time for the member.

**Mr. Offer:** I compliment the CVCA, the Minister of Natural Resources and ACAO in this consultative process.

#### RENT REGULATION

**Mr. Breaugh:** At a meeting of the Federation of Metro Tenants' Associations on the weekend, we had some lengthy discussions about rent review. The consensus among tenants is that rent review in Ontario is indeed a mess. If there is any one opinion that is shared by both tenants and landlords, it is the simple, unfortunate fact that the rent review system in Ontario is not working and is getting worse by the moment.

It is interesting to note some statistics on the matter. Between July 31 and October 31 there was actually a decrease in the number of cases, but the decrease is largely attributable to the fact that there were 3,767 withdrawals of applications. We now have 242,000 rental units awaiting a decision. That is almost 24 per cent. Of the available rental units in Ontario, 23.2 per cent are caught in this logjam of rent review.

I think that many tenants are now beginning to understand that, no matter what the minister says in the House, the average is over 11 per cent in terms of the awards that are given by rent review and in fact landlords are rewarded for making what in other quarters would be considered just plain bad business mistakes. To quote one tenant who wrote to the minister, "Is it good business to buy something 'at a loss' and 'suffer hardships' because your laws have made such flipovers legal and guaranteed such poor businessmen a profit at the expense of the hapless tenants?"

**Mr. Speaker:** The member's time has now expired.

**Mr. Breaugh:** The answer is yes.

#### BHOPAL DISASTER

**Mrs. Marland:** I rise today to speak about the Bhopal disaster. On December 3, 1984, a chemical leak occurred at an Indian chemical plant owned by Union Carbide. The plant, which produced potent pesticides, was located close to residential areas in the city of Bhopal. Over 2,000 people were killed by the deadly fumes.

On this day we join with Canadians of Indian descent, many of whose relatives were killed in Bhopal, in remembering a tragedy which took so many lives. This incident, like many others experienced throughout the world, serves to remind us of the need to maintain stringent safety standards in those plants which produce dangerous chemicals and in those warehouses in which hazardous materials are stored.

These global tragedies also serve to remind us all who live in freedom and a democracy that we are indeed blessed and that we should cherish our good life and use our days to always make life better for those who do not have the same opportunities or blessings.

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#### JOHN JONES

**Mr. Faubert:** I stand today to pay tribute to an up-and-coming resident of Thunder Bay, Ontario, who may soon become a household name, John Jones.

John Jones has recently taken another step upward in his auto racing career by being named the number one driver for the Labatt-Protofab racing team. Mr. Jones, who is the 1988 CART/PPG Indy Car World Series rookie of the year, will now have a very competitive car in which to compete.

Many racing experts are predicting even better results for next year. As auto racing fans across the province look forward to next year's Molson Indy, the thought of the race being won by a Canadian driver is no longer the impossible dream.

On behalf of all members of this Legislature, I congratulate John Jones for his successes to date and I wish him every success in his promising future as a star in the CART/PPG Indy Car World Series.

**Mrs. Marland:** I rise to request unanimous consent to commemorate the anniversary of Portuguese independence.

Agreed to.

## PORTUGUESE INDEPENDENCE DAY

**Mrs. Marland:** I rise today to commemorate the anniversary of Portuguese independence. It was on this date in the year 1640 that the nation of Portugal was able to regain its complete independence from Spain.

In the 15th and 16th centuries, Portugal's close proximity to Spain on the Iberian Peninsula resulted in strong ties between the two nations. This culminated in a dynastic union of the Spanish and Portuguese royal families. In 1580, Philip II of Spain claimed the Portuguese throne by marriage and the Spanish king led a successful invasion of Portugal. Eventually, Spanish wars, taxes and internal domination led to uprisings in Portugal and a revolution gripped the nation in 1640. On December 1 of that year, the last remnants of the Spanish occupation force fled Portugal and the Portuguese state was re-established.

In recent times, Portugal has been rocked by internal strife and military rule, and continual power struggles between forces of the left and right brought great instability to the nation. However, the establishment of democratic government and rule by the people in the late 1970s has meant remarkable improvements in the standard of living enjoyed by the Portuguese people.

If there is one quality I admire most about the Portuguese it is their fervent desire to remain independent, to protect their culture and their heritage. Throughout the history of this small nation there has been one common theme: the Portuguese have fought to protect and strengthen their nation despite the presence of many larger, stronger countries nearby. I think it is true that the Portuguese have succeeded.

This has not meant that the Portuguese have built up walls to the outside world. On the contrary, the Portuguese state has shown great confidence in maintaining ties with its allies and neighbours. Of course, Portugal is a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization alliance and is a firm ally of Canada. Portugal has also entered into a free trade agreement by joining the European Community. I think it is clear that the Portuguese people are not afraid to be swallowed up under free trade, and our recent federal election proved that the Canadian people are just as confident in the future of our nation.

We in the Progressive Conservative Party join with the people of Portugal in marking the anniversary of the independence of this small but courageous nation.

I would like to take this opportunity to point out that close to 100,000 Ontarians are of Portuguese descent. Several large Portuguese communities have been established in such cities as Toronto, Hamilton, Brampton and Cambridge. These Ontarians came to this province seeking a better life and they have greatly enriched our cultural heritage.

Our ties with Portugal do not end there, however. In the past three years, over 220,000 Canadian tourists have ventured to Portugal. Some have gone to visit family members. Others have gone to enjoy the warmth of the Algarve. Still others just wish to explore this beautiful nation.

It is my hope that Canada and Portugal will maintain and increase our ties in trade and tourism as both nations move towards a very bright future, which I hope to a great extent will also include the province of Ontario.

**Mr. Ruprecht:** On behalf of the Premier (Mr. Peterson), the Minister of Citizenship (Mr. Phillips) and the government of Ontario, I rise to the purpose of recognizing an important event that dates back to 340 years ago, which has been celebrated as Portuguese National Day and Independence Day.

The celebration of the Independence Day of Portugal is special and unique in the pages of history. This date commemorates December 1, 1640, when a quick revolution in Lisbon on that day overthrew 60 years of Spanish rule and reinstated the Portuguese monarchy and the king, Don Juan IV.

On this historic occasion, we ask the people of Ontario and all those of Portuguese heritage to join us in the remembrance of this special day. We are, of course, cognizant and appreciative of the tremendous contribution that our Portuguese friends have made to the development and growth of our province and country, both in economic and cultural fields.

Yet, as important as the economic contributions are, the attention of Portuguese-Canadian children today is focused not on the prosperity and wealth that opportunities in Canada create, but on our democratic system of government, which allows all citizens in our multicultural society of Ontario to celebrate a day of national importance.

[Remarks in Portuguese]

**Mr. B. Rae:** I am delighted to participate in this celebration of Portuguese Independence Day. It is interesting to note that of all the countries in the world that have a connection with Canada as Canada now is, our association with



Portugal probably goes back as far as with any other country. It is worth remembering that Portuguese fishermen were on the banks of what is now Newfoundland at least 500 years ago, that Portuguese communities date back some 500 years, that there is a very strong historic connection between our two countries for that reason, as well as for the obvious reason now, that particularly since the Second World War and indeed even more immediately since the mid-1960s, there has been such a substantial immigration of people from all over Portugal as well as the islands to Canada, and to Toronto in particular.

I am delighted to join in this celebration with my colleagues the member for Mississauga South (Mrs. Marland) and the member for Parkdale (Mr. Ruprecht), and to say to the House that we join in this celebration and look forward very much to a long and happy relationship with the people of Portugal, with the country of Portugal, as well as with the many Portuguese citizens who have done so much to build this great city of ours, who have done so much to add to the nature of Canada and the nature of Ontario and Toronto. Today is a great day and we are just delighted to be able to participate in this celebration.

[Remark in Portuguese]

## STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY

### COMPUTERS-IN-EDUCATION GRANTS PROGRAM

**Hon. Mr. Ward:** As members know, the Provincial Auditor's report deals with my ministry's computers-in-education program.

My ministry has introduced important changes in computer policy and in the administration of that policy.

First of all, we are no longer pursuing the concept of developing a single "ideal" microcomputer. The restrictive requirements for participation in my ministry's grants program were removed earlier this year. What we are doing now is providing grants that allow school boards to purchase more widely available high-quality microcomputers and software that meet the needs of our students.

To deal with the concerns about incompatibility, I announced last summer that my ministry was undertaking a project to improve software portability. This would ensure that ministry-commissioned software would be able to run on all approved microcomputers with greater cost-effectiveness. The Provincial Auditor's findings confirm our decision.

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In addition, I announced recently in the Legislature that school boards will be allowed to use a portion of their computer grants to purchase less costly machines. This will mean that we can meet our commitment to provide every student with 30 minutes of computer time daily by 1996 at substantially less cost to the taxpayer.

We have also taken steps to address the auditor's concerns about management and control of expenditure in the computers-in-education centre. A change in organization within the centre this past spring has resulted in efficient and effective monitoring and control of money spent on the development and licensing of software.

I agree with the auditor that more must be done to train teachers in the use of computers. That is why I recently announced a measure that will allow boards to apply a portion of their computer funding to related teacher training.

With respect to research, there are currently three regional pilot test centres that study exemplary uses of computers in the classroom. I will be asking my Advisory Council on Educational Technology to make recommendations on the establishment of more of these centres over the next year.

These steps in the renewal of the computers-in-education program address the specific findings of the Provincial Auditor. This renewal has been under way for some time and further changes are forthcoming. I believe these changes ensure that public funds are spent more effectively, providing better value for tax dollars.

## RESPONSES

### COMPUTERS-IN-EDUCATION GRANTS PROGRAM

**Mr. B. Rae:** I am delighted to respond to the statement by the Minister of Education (Mr. Ward). I can only tell him that in the educational community I deal with and talk to, there is extraordinary scepticism about the program which was introduced by an earlier government and maintained and continued by his own; that the comments by the auditor have not been fully addressed in his statement; and that, in fact, there remain some very profound problems with the system with which various boards have been saddled.

It has proven to be a very expensive mistake. I might add that the Ministry of Education is not the only public body in this province, within my knowledge, that has been saddled with a computer system which is less than adequate to

the needs of those who are using it. The provision of what I would describe as Studebaker systems of computers to various public bodies seems to be a habit of mind in this province, which is very troublesome.

I am glad the minister has indicated that there is going to be more flexibility in terms of the hardware that is now able to be purchased by various boards and obviously glad that software is being developed. I think this will be looked upon as an example of how not to make an intelligent decision with respect to the use of a new technology when we look back on it.

The saddling of the whole system with a technology which was not fully worked out, which is expensive and for which it has proven until very recently very difficult to find software which is usable and readily accessible for children, when at the same time kids at home are using entirely different equipment which is being replaced all the time, which has piles of software available, is a tragic misuse of public dollars.

I hope it is one in which the minister will continue to take a leadership role in making sure we accept the fact that a mistake was made, accept the fact that we are going to have to pay for that mistake, and that we get on with a flexible, usable, accessible system, accessible for all the kids who need it and who want it and, I might add, their parents who are being educated in the same regard.

Now I have to sit down because the member for Etobicoke-Rexdale (Mr. Philip) wants to say something.

**Mr. Philip:** The minister's statement clearly does not deal with the essential problems we are facing in this series of revelations by the Provincial Auditor. In the first place, there were no clear, set objectives in place for this program. If there had been, there would have been an integration of this set of programs along with the 74 per cent of all software that was not encompassed in this program. Indeed, there would have been adequate training.

The teachers in the programs are the recipients of hardware without any adequate training so that they can use it in a way that will be of benefit to the students. There was no assessment, which should surely form the basis of any expensive program. So you have no setting of objectives, no co-ordination of the program with other programs, no testing and no training of those who are responsible for implementing the program. Clearly, this is a matter that should be investigated by the standing committee on public accounts. No doubt when the ministry officials are called

before us, they will be questioned very strenuously by members of all parties on that committee.

**Mr. Speaker:** Further responses. Ministerial statements and responses.

**Mr. B. Rae:** Wait a minute. You mean nobody is going to defend Bette?

**Mr. Breagh:** I can hear Bette's boots stomping already.

**Mr. Sterling:** Sometimes we know when to be quiet.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. Could I have the members' attention? Oral questions. The Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. B. Rae:** If the members of the Conservative Party want to respond to the statement, I am quite happy to allow them to do so.

**Mr. Speaker:** I appreciate the offer. However, they have had the opportunity and I have called for oral questions.

### ORAL QUESTIONS

**Mr. B. Rae:** I might give the government notice that I do have a question for the Minister of Health (Mrs. Caplan) with respect to the tragedy yesterday. I understand that she is going to be here. I will not ask the question of the Premier (Mr. Peterson) because, frankly, I think the minister can give us a more up-to-date report than the Premier can as to what she found yesterday. So I will give the government notice that I will stand down that question. If I may turn immediately to my second question, I will ask it of the Premier.

### TEMAGAMI DISTRICT RESOURCES

**Mr. B. Rae:** The Premier will know, I am sure, because he has been briefed on this matter by the Attorney General (Mr. Scott)—at least I suspect that he has—that the Temagami Wilderness Society filed its application with the Divisional Court on June 24, nearly six months ago. I wonder if he can explain why the government has not responded in any way with any documents at all to the application filed by the Temagami Wilderness Society, if he really is interested in getting on with this matter.

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** The Attorney General can respond to that.

**Hon. Mr. Scott:** My understanding is that the wilderness society, either under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act or in the proceedings themselves, has requested certain documents. We are getting those documents



together. If it has not already happened, they will in due course be filed.

**Mr. B. Rae:** But there is not even a response to the application. The Attorney General knows what an application for judicial review looks like. He has handled, I would think, a couple hundred of them in his role as a private practitioner. He knows full well that if you want to get on with an action before the Divisional Court, if you are interested in solving a problem before the Divisional Court, as a government you respond to them; as one of the parties to the action, you respond.

I might point out to the Attorney General that in its application and indeed in the accompanying documents that have been filed with the court, the Temagami Wilderness Society makes it clear that, in fact, there has been no environmental assessment of the entire question of logging practices, harvesting practices or any of the issues about the land around the road which was to be built.

I wonder if the Attorney General would not agree with me that if he is going to protect the environment or give the environment equal weight, as was implied in the statement made by his colleague the Minister of Northern Development (Mr. Fontaine), the very least that should be done is that there should be some kind of environmental assessment that deals not simply with the question of the narrow construction of a road, but with the broader question of what that road is to be used for and what the implications are of extensive logging practices on the future of the area as a wilderness reserve.

1400

**Hon. Mr. Scott:** The first point to observe is that the government, in fact, has responded to the applications. As the honourable member knows, there is a form under which that is done and we have done it. We will attend in court to respond to the case whenever the Temagami Wilderness Society arranges to have the case called. That is the first point.

On the second point, I would direct my honourable friend to the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley) or the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Kerrio) who will be able to provide details for him, but my understanding is that the Red Squirrel Road was subjected to a full environmental assessment and indeed the Minister of the Environment imposed some 29 conditions on the mode, the manner and the timing in which that construction might take place.

**Mr. B. Rae:** The minister will also know, or the Attorney General should know if he does not, that the entire question—first of all, there has been no hearing of any kind and the minister ordered that there would be no hearing, even with respect to the narrow question of the road. I say to the Attorney General that the question of the use of the area or the land around the road, the question of harvesting practices, timber practices, logging practices and the impact those are going to have on the environment is what is troubling people.

I would like to ask the Attorney General, does he not feel that this government has badly mishandled an issue, particularly when we know that on September 18, 1987, 700 delegates to the World Wilderness Congress passed the following resolution: "The fourth World Wilderness Congress urges the Ontario government to terminate roadbuilding and resource extraction activities in the Temagami-Lady Evelyn wilderness and to implement a form of wilderness reserve bordering the existing Lady Evelyn provincial park."

Co-signatories to the resolution were The International Union for Conservation of Nature, the Wilderness Society, the Sierra Club of the United States and the Sierra Club of Eastern Canada, Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, the Federation of Ontario Naturalists—

**Mr. Speaker:** I am just wondering if the member does have a supplementary.

**Mr. B. Rae:** Why not subject the entire area to an environmental assessment hearing and not simply the narrow question of the construction of a road, which, frankly, is far less important than the uses to which that road is being—

**Mr. Speaker:** I am sure there is a question somewhere there.

**Hon. Mr. Scott:** I am sure the honourable member will want to direct his questions respecting the environment to the Minister of the Environment when he is here. But as the honourable member will know, 80 per cent of the projects that are submitted do not require an environmental assessment because conditions can be imposed. If he is unaware of that, he will want to ask the honourable member for Algoma (Mr. Wildman), who lobbied strenuously to avoid an environmental assessment at the Magpie River project, which was a project of very considerable importance to his constituents.

#### POLICIES ON ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

**Mr. Brandt:** My question is for the Premier and it relates to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade meetings that are going to be opening



this Monday in Montreal. It is my understanding that the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Mr. Kwinter) will in fact be Ontario's representative at that particular meeting. Is it the continued position of the government of Ontario that the government will be defying the decision by GATT, which ruling was brought down in November, 1987, with respect to Ontario's suggested discriminatory markup and pricing policies, and is that the position the minister will be taking to Montreal relative to Ontario?

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** With great respect to my friend opposite, I think his facts are wrong. There has been no final determination from GATT. There have been discussions with GATT. As the member knows, representatives of the various governments were in Brussels last week, I believe. There may be another meeting before the end of the year. There has been no meeting of the GATT council on this matter. Various positions with respect to beer and wine across the nation are being discussed but there has been no GATT ruling in that regard.

The member is quite right, the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology will be attending, I believe just as an observer, for the opening of that midterm review of the GATT discussions next week in Montreal.

As I understand it—it is, as I said, a midterm review—it is to monitor the progress and at the same time take the international temperature or an assessment of the international will to proceed with the round of GATT discussions. As the member knows, those will proceed if there is the collective political will in the free world to generate that. So that is what I think those meetings are about. I do not think they will be getting into specifics of particular problems.

**Mr. Brandt:** It is interesting to note that on the same day the Premier indicated that he would be defying any GATT ruling with respect to the suggested discriminatory pricing policy, he also made a comment in connection with his interest and the interest of his government in trading with the entire world.

Now, recognizing that GATT is, in fact, the world authority with respect to trading practices, I find that somewhat contradictory in that, on the one hand, the Premier is defying a GATT ruling and, on the other hand, he is indicating that he wants to open up Ontario markets to the rest of the world and not be so closely aligned with the United States.

The point I make to the Premier is that it is quite obvious that if the GATT ruling is defied by the province of Ontario it can then follow that the

European Community can retaliate not just against Ontario but against the rest of Canada as it relates to trading practices. Does the Premier not find that the position Ontario is putting Canada in, relative to retaliatory action on the part of other signatories to the GATT decisions, is an unfair position and may well cost jobs in other parts of Canada?

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** No, absolutely not, and I think my honourable friend's preamble is incorrect. We did not talk about defying a GATT ruling. There are negotiations going on with GATT and they will go to the GATT council some time in the not-too-distant future. As the member knows, there is a preliminary ruling and then it goes on to the council which, in the meantime, invites a national response. That is the way it happens with Japan, Germany or any other country.

So the question now is being negotiated before it goes to the GATT council. The question then becomes who is speaking out in our national interest, and are those negotiations being well conducted on behalf of Canada? Ontario is there, but all the other provinces are there as well. We have a particular interest in the beer and the wine issue.

The question before the federal government, which is in charge of these negotiations, is, are they good negotiators and are they putting forward Canada's position in a forceful and effective way or are we going to get snookered?

**Mr. Brandt:** I think that is a little unfair. Let me say that the European Community has already made it very clear that it has been waiting for some 15 years for an appropriate change in Ontario's policy with respect to markup and pricing practices. Those 15 years, admittedly, go back to the time of a former government, but the issue is before this government now to deal with. The reality is that the European Community has made it very clear that it is not prepared to wait another 12 years to have this matter resolved.

Looking at that in its proper context, the issue is coming down to the fact that the European Community, through GATT, is making it abundantly clear that this government's pricing policies are not acceptable. What position is the Premier prepared to put before GATT on Monday in Montreal? If he says it is only a fact-finding mission, is he prepared to subject the rest of Canada at some later date to retaliation by other communities in connection with our trading practices? I think that is a very reasonable question.



**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** My honourable friend says that GATT has patiently waited for 15 years for a resolution of this problem. As a former Minister of Industry and Trade, he is now standing and acknowledging that he created the problem.

I understand, as he does, that Premier Davis gave certain assurances under his hand that his government did not honour and that, in fact, imperilled the credibility of the province somewhat in discussions. I recognize that.

We have put forward to GATT and to our Canadian colleagues a very reasonable position. We have discussed compensation and working out the system with the grape growers and with the wine industry. Now, if my honourable friend is standing up and saying that that is not reasonable, that we should be tougher on our wine and grape industry and wipe it completely out, then he should stand in the House and say that.

What I am telling the member, and I say it with great respect, is that he is getting incorrect information in his briefing documents, because he does not understand what he is talking about. What he should be doing is standing up and fighting for Ontario farmers and Ontario jobs. That is what we are doing.

**Mr. Pope:** Like the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. B. Rae), our second question is for the Minister of Health. We will stand it down.

1410

**Mr. Speaker:** We will start the regular rotation. The member for Oshawa.

#### ROOMERS, BOARDERS AND LODGERS

**Mr. Breagh:** I have a question for the Minister of Housing concerning what is called, in the city of North York, Operation Dirty Harry. Is the minister aware that the city of North York, the city with a heart, has decided that it does not want rooming houses in North York, does not want to regulate, standardize or license them, wants to do away with them, and that it has instructed one of its building inspectors to go around and entrap those who would rent rooms to lodgers? Is the minister aware that that is obviously in direct contradiction to the stated policy intention of the province of Ontario to do away with these kind of exclusionary bylaws; and what is she doing about it?

**Hon. Ms. Hošek:** What we have done, in trying to address the whole issue of having open communities in which people can live in communities in a variety of housing forms, is to indicate our commitments and our guidelines and

goals in the land use policy statement. That statement is out for discussion with all the municipalities of the province, and in particular with the ones that face the most serious housing pressures, of which North York is one, as the member full well knows.

What we are asking all municipalities to do is to work with us to decide how to meet the goals that we have stated, and the goals include having open communities with a mix of housing types in which a variety of people can meet their housing needs. One of those goals is to indicate areas within each municipality in which boarding houses will be zoned and will be appropriate, with controls but none the less available.

We are working with all municipalities to reach that goal, and, as we do that, our policy statement stands as a kind of direction to the Ontario Municipal Board while it makes its decisions in the interim as we are working with municipalities to make sure that our goals are met.

**Mr. Breagh:** The minister's land use statement is not the only thing that is out in the cold. Is she not aware that while she is dithering through all of this, making her public statements, circulating her papers, there are people like John Laskey, who lives at 25 Purbrook Court in North York, whose landlord was in fact entrapped under Operation Dirty Harry? The landlord is facing a \$20,000 fine. He wants to evict all of the roomers in the building. He went around and smashed all the windows to force them out on the street.

Is the minister not aware that while she is doing all of this discussing and circulating and talking about things, people are in fact going to be thrown out on the street in the middle of a Canadian winter while she goes through this pleasant discussion exercise?

**Hon. Ms. Hošek:** First of all, no landlord is free to harass tenants or to evict them in that way, and, if he is doing so, there are ways of meeting those concerns through the systems we currently have.

I should point out to the member that, very recently, the Ontario Municipal Board ruled that a tenant in an apartment in the Beaches, who was facing eviction because of the municipality's—

**Mr. Breagh:** Don't tell me, tell John Laskey, who is out on the street.

**Hon. Ms. Hošek:** Because of that reason, the OMB decision I think is a precedent. It is available for the future. It is a statement about the impact our statements have had on the Ontario Municipal Board. It seems to me that that is a

very important new direction and that it is a direct result of our concerns about housing affordability.

#### TEMAGAMI DISTRICT RESOURCES

**Mr. Harris:** I have a question for the Premier concerning the announcement made in the Temagami district situation. For a year and a half his government has been dilly-dallying with the Temagami problem. It has not been able to make a decision on what to do, and because of the inability to act, the problem has continued to get worse and worse throughout this time. The latest attempt to address the situation has been a complete failure. Not only has it outraged all the parties involved, but also it has come far too late to be of benefit to workers of William Milne and Sons lumber. The company's loan is being called today, as we speak.

The action the Premier took on Tuesday came a year and a half too late for some 200 workers and their families. Could he tell us today what facts he knows now that we in the north did not already know a year and a half ago, and why it took him so long to make a decision?

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** I reject completely my friend's analysis of the situation. He has followed this situation. I have read about a number of the things he has said many months ago and have heard the things he says in the House, and they do not always square, let me say, or square with other members' advice on this matter. I think one of the things he has found is that this government has been consistent throughout this matter.

We have reviewed the chronology on several occasions. We faced an extremely difficult situation with the land claim, as the member knows, and with other legal problems that developed in the area.

We had said to Milne that we would guarantee that wood supply. We contributed some money to keep Milne going. If they have problems—as the member knows, they have an enormous bank debt—those are commercial problems unrelated to other situations. I think we have been fair about this; we have been patient, we have discussed it with all the various interests.

He can see, I assume, from what he is telling me today, that his view is very different from that of the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. B. Rae), who would have us do other things. I can say that we have canvassed all the options. We have been as fair as a government can possibly be. We have exercised restraint, discretion and judgement. I

think that the course of action we have taken is a good one.

We are not just concerned about Milne. We are concerned about Liskeard and Goulard and, indeed, the economic viability of that area. We are also concerned about parks and we have substantially increased the parks in those areas, as the member knows. But we run into these difficult issues of resource management. Everybody thinks his claim is higher and more important than someone else's claim in this matter. This government has chosen a course of action that is sensible, not just for the Temagami area but for the entire area and for generations to come.

**Mr. Harris:** There is not a single, solitary fact today different from what it was a year and a half ago. They were all before the Premier at that time. The Premier has said consistently, when it comes to free trade, that the federal government is solely responsible for any negative impacts that may come about from free trade. Now, I say to him that we in the north have been able to solve our own problems for a goodly period of years.

When left alone by those who know nothing of those problems in northern Ontario, the loggers, the tourist operators, the Indians and the environmentalists who live in the north have been able to solve those problems with the Ministry of Natural Resources. All the Premier has done in the past year and a half with his interventions is to put 200 jobs in Temagami at risk.

**Mr. Speaker:** Question.

**Mr. Harris:** It is his sole responsibility, the sole responsibility of his government, and I would ask him now, given that those jobs are lost, what is he going to do three months from now, a month from now, a week from now—indeed, tomorrow—for those 200 families so that they can have meaningful jobs?

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** I think that this government has taken a fair, balanced and reasonable approach in this matter. Milne is a particular situation, as my honourable friend has brought up. As he knows, they are into the bank for some \$5 million. We came to assist them some months ago with a \$750,000 guarantee. There is a company that is in some trouble. We asked our industrial—

**Mr. Harris:** Because of the lack of security of wood supply.

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** That is nonsense, I say with great respect. I know my honourable friend wants to stand up in this House and make a variety of charges. They have always had wood,



and their problems are localized. The industrial restructuring commissioner is looking at it. If the member wants to know about Milne's problems particularly he can look at its debt structure, its capitalization, its management and its commercial problems.

They have had wood and we have told them they would have that wood. I say to my friend that his analysis of the situation is incorrect. We have been positive, we have been constructive, we have tried to work with the various interests, because we think there is a balance that can be struck between the interest groups.

We have had numerous conversations and discussions. I know the member's view is very different from that of the Leader of the Opposition. The member is entitled to his view in this matter. He would have disregarded the native groups, he would have disregarded the environmentalists and a number of others. But that is not our approach, and I think we have shown judgement in this matter.

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. I will remind the members, you are wasting other members' time.

1420

#### LABOUR-BUSINESS-GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

**Mr. Tatham:** My question is for the Minister of Labour. Tim Armstrong, agent general, Asia-Pacific region, speaking to Queen's University, talked about Japanese consensus methods and their relevance to Canada. He said:

"Having observed the Japanese system for two years and listened carefully to both sides of the debate, both here in Canada and in Japan, I have concluded that there should be no impediment to Canadians practising the same sort of collaboration in the work setting and in government-business relations that has given such strength to the post-war Japanese economy."

Should we be pursuing this same course of action?

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** I want to thank the member for Oxford for the question and for notifying me that he would be raising this issue with me in the House.

Let me say first of all that Mr. Armstrong, as Ontario's agent general in the Asia-Pacific region, brings a great deal of authority to the matters about which he spoke at Queen's University. Indeed, he has been not only Deputy Minister of Labour but also, before that, a noted professional in the Ontario labour bar.

The question of consensus within labour-management-government relations is a very important one, and I think I would agree with Mr. Armstrong that there is a great deal we can learn from the Japanese in that regard. At the same time, I think that there is a great deal the Japanese can learn from the Canadian experience, and I think there is no one better than Mr. Armstrong to help in that regard.

Of course, there are some limitations on the government of Ontario, because we do not have at our disposal the tools that a nation, whether that nation be Canada or Japan, has to create those sorts of models; but a number of initiatives have been taken in Ontario and in Canada.

Probably the most significant is the workplace hazardous materials information system, which really was a triumph in terms of collaboration among workers, employers and government.

**Mr. Tatham:** Should we encourage, through our school system, a consensus approach rather than a confrontational approach in labour-management relations?

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** I want to tell my friend the member for Oxford that there are a number of initiatives going on right here in Ontario which are building this consensus approach. Indeed, within an area of responsibility that falls squarely on the shoulders of the Ministry of Labour in Ontario, health and safety, we are now working on a model that would create a forum in which consensus on health and safety regulation could be the norm rather than the exception.

#### USE OF CONSULTANTS

**Mr. Philip:** I have a question for the Minister of Community and Social Services. The minister will be aware that a mother and three children aged 10 to 15 in this province will receive approximately \$849 a month in family benefits.

In the light of that information, can the minister justify the criticism of the Provincial Auditor, who has pointed out that his ministry has used consultants unnecessarily, consultants whose earnings would be more than double those of employees doing similar types of work in that same ministry and who, in fact, would have earned more in two days than a mother and three children under his plan would earn in a month? Can he justify what went wrong to have that kind of expenditure?

**Hon. Mr. Sweeney:** I believe the reference from the honourable member is to the comprehensive income maintenance system, or CIMS, computer system that has been installed in our ministry. The honourable member might recall

that this program started back in 1980 and that the original cost projection was dramatically out of line because the consultant who was brought in at that time totally underestimated the complexity of the Ontario income maintenance system. Once a more reasonable figure had been approached, it was obviously necessary to bring other consultants in to design the system and to make it work.

The member is obviously aware of the fact that while on a per diem basis it is more expensive to use a consultant, it is less expensive than to hire people on a full-time basis. That is the decision that was made prior to 1985 and that is the decision that has been made subsequent to 1985.

**Mr. Philip:** One of these consultants was in fact doing his so-called daily work for seven years, which strikes me as somewhat less than a part-time, temporary day or two at a time.

The minister will be aware that on July 29, the Chairman of Management Board (Mr. Elston) signed an agreement that these consultants could be hired, but only under certain conditions, the conditions being that the consultants under contract would have defined requirements. Can the minister tell us why his ministry did not meet those requirements set down by Management Board for the hiring of these consultants?

**Hon. Mr. Sweeney:** As the honourable member points out, when we employ consultants like this, particularly at per diem rates, we do have to check with Management Board and get approval. In each case, if we are unable to meet the strict requirements of Management Board, we go back to Management Board and make that correction. If Management Board does not support us, then we cannot do it.

I can assure the honourable member that we do not go off into left field on our own. We get our directions. We either follow those directions or we go back and get a change in those directions. The total amount of money we are allowed to spend is determined in advance, and if we exceed that we must go back once again and demonstrate in a very clear way why we need more money.

I would point out to the honourable member that part of the difficulty which the auditor discovered was true when I first became minister three and a half years ago. I can tell him that those particular problems have all been corrected. This computer system is now working very effectively in every one of our ministry offices. It has already been installed in four municipal offices, and we have asked by seven other municipalities to install it in their offices beginning in February.

There were some problems with the original system. It was because of the complexity of it. Those problems have been resolved. The system is working. The other difficulties the auditor found with respect to our monitoring of the municipal systems is going to be resolved, partially at least, by this computer system.

#### NIAGARA REGIONAL POLICE

**Mr. Sterling:** I have a question of the Attorney General. Yesterday, during the probe investigating allegations of wrongdoing by members of the Niagara Regional Police Force, it was revealed that six volumes of material from an internal investigation were sent by the Niagara commission to the Attorney General's office in June 1987.

The internal investigation recommended that a number of charges be laid. Following a review of this report by your ministry officials—and I do not know whether the Attorney General reviewed it himself—it was determined that no charges be laid.

There have been three independent legal opinions that were obtained on this very same material, and each of the lawyers found that reasonable grounds exist to lay charges.

Will the Attorney General explain this inconsistency?

**Hon. Mr. Scott:** I do not know that I can explain the inconsistency. I can explain what happened. What happened was that the police brought to the crown law office the results of their investigation. The crown law staff, the most experienced staff in Canada dealing with matters of this type, reviewed it and concluded that there was insufficient evidence to warrant the laying of any charges and so advised the police.

That, of course, does not preclude the police from themselves laying the charge by appearing before a justice of the peace, but they asked our opinion and we gave it to them in the best and most thorough way we could.

**Mr. Sterling:** Surely if there are reasonable grounds, it is the duty of the Attorney General to lay charges. We have been left now with a situation that is one of uncertainty. We have two opinions: one opinion of the ministry officials and one of three other lawyers who examined the very same material.

In light of this, would the Attorney General consider sending this particular material to either the whole standing committee on the administration of justice or to members of the justice committee, who could meet in camera and go over that particular material so they could clear



the air with regard to this investigation on both sides, both for those people who have been alleged to have done some wrongdoing and for the members of the public?

Why does the Attorney General not let the justice committee have a look at this material in camera so that we can make a determination in this Legislature whether or not there are reasonable grounds for charges being laid?

1430

**Hon. Mr. Scott:** The material is not ours; it belongs to the police. The police showed it to us. After we had given our opinion, we returned it to the police. If my friend wants to get the material, he should direct himself to the chief of police of the Niagara region because we no longer have access to this material. I suggest to him he should therefore direct himself to the chief, who has the material.

If my friend is interested in other opinions, he will be interested to hear that we also have asked other counsel to examine our opinion and have received concurring opinions that our advice to the police was, in all the circumstances, entirely sound.

**Mr. Speaker:** The Leader of the Opposition might revert to the first question.

#### AIR AMBULANCE SERVICES

**Mr. B. Rae:** I have some questions for the Minister of Health with respect to the crash of the air ambulance yesterday and the tragic death of the four people who were on board the flight.

Yesterday, in my response to the statement that was made by the Minister of Northern Development (Mr. Fontaine), in expressing our condolences to the families of all those involved I pointed out to the minister that Mr. Harris, one of the four people who died, was in fact here on November 17 at the time there was a general lobby of the Legislature with respect to the adequacy of our ambulance services.

I met with him, along with others, in our caucus room, and he discussed with me very openly concerns he had about the impact of subcontracting, as a pattern across the whole air ambulance service on the provision of that service. Those comments were backed up by statements made by Mr. Shapiro. I am speaking of Jack Shapiro, who is the commissioner in the public inquiry into ambulance and emergency services.

In light of this experience, does the minister not feel the need for a broader public inquiry into the question of the practice of subcontracting out flights and subcontracting out the entire ambu-

lance service to the private sector? Does she not think that is now a worthy question to be studied by someone independent of the government?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** As I rise today, I think it is important to offer condolences to the family, the friends and the colleagues of the four professionals who were killed in the air ambulance crash. As the Leader of the Opposition knows, I was in Timmins yesterday to express condolences on a personal basis.

The crash is currently being investigated by the Canadian Aviation Safety Board, as well as by the local coroner. I believe it is very important that all the facts come out. I have given my assurance that the ministry will co-operate in every way it can, not only in providing the support necessary for the investigations but also in helping to get whatever information they need to make sure that the investigations, which are so important, will be completed as soon as possible.

**Mr. B. Rae:** Ten people have died since 1977 in crashes of air ambulances. Mr. Shapiro raised a number of questions about the adequacy of the service. Mr. Harris raised with me some very specific concerns he had about safety. Indeed, he said to me he was preparing a case under our health and safety laws. He felt he had sufficient concerns about the practices within the subcontracted services that he was speaking with me, and I might add not only with me but I know with many other people.

In light of that, I wonder if the minister would not agree with me that neither a coroner's inquest nor an air safety investigation, both of which are required by law, really deals with a separate policy issue.

Since her own ministry has made this policy decision, going back to 1977, that all air ambulance services will be offered on a contracted basis, as is much of the other ambulance service across the province, does the minister not feel that this entire question of the adequacy of contracting out these services, as well as other ambulance services, deserves a full public inquiry with subpoena powers and clear capacity to cross-examine witnesses, to get to the bottom of whether we are in fact providing the best possible service we can?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** I think the Leader of the Opposition will know that I have said repeatedly during my time as Minister of Health that public safety is always my number one concern and that in making decisions I will always tilt on the side of public safety, quality assurance and protection of the public; that is always our number one priority.

In this particular case, I believe the investigation being carried out by the Canadian Aviation Safety Board is a very important one. I will do whatever I can to make sure it has whatever information the ministry can provide, so we can get the facts and make sure any and all questions being asked will be answered.

I will do that so we will have confidence, as we should, that the safety and the standards we have are appropriate to give the public confidence that the safety of the professionals who operate the machines and who provide paramedic services, and the safety of the patients and the people, particularly in northern Ontario, who rely on that service, is always assured.

**Mr. B. Rae:** Just so the minister will know the problem—I am sure she is aware of it—In Pembroke, for example, contracts have changed hands over the years simply because different companies find a problem meeting the requirements or they feel they are losing too much money providing a service, so a new company comes in and provides the service.

There are real questions about management, about whether this is the soundest and safest way to run an entire system. That is what is at stake here: an entire system that has been operated in a certain way over the years in order to save money and provide the best value for money in the system. That is the way the government of the day decided to operate it, on a series of contracts awarded at different times to different companies. They come and they go and they change.

As the minister will know, this was the first flight of this particular company with respect to the transfer of patients from this area; although not, I might add, from other areas.

The question of the overall management of that system, of the adequacy of the safety and the adequacy of the general level of service being provided was also very specifically criticized on pages 61 and 62 of Mr. Shapiro's report.

Does the minister not now think it would be worth everyone's time and worth perhaps many people's lives and health if we had a thorough public review by someone outside the ministry who would have the power to question the policy decisions that have been taken with respect to the management of this service?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** The ministry has very clear safety standards that are important and that we ensure are applied consistently across the province. We have those. They have been in place for quite some time. I think the Leader of the Opposition knows that is the truth and that is reality.

It is very important, when we talk about this issue, to recognize there are several concerns. One is the concern to make sure that all the facts come out and that we have all the information. I believe very strongly that the Canadian Aviation Safety Board, which is a body independent of government, will do that. He and I agree on the need for that kind of investigation and I believe that is appropriate.

Where we disagree is on basic philosophy. He believes that quality assurance and accountability go beyond who delivers the service to the fact that government should run everything. There, we disagree. I believe that as long as we have safety standards, quality assurance and accountability, it is important to look at how service is provided, not at necessarily who in government is providing that service.

**Mr. Pope:** I would like to pursue the matter of accountability that the minister has just raised. The minister has said her ministry has clear safety standards and quality assurance programs in place with respect to the air ambulance system in northern Ontario.

Would the minister confirm that her ministry is responsible for administering the air ambulance system, including the safety standards and the quality assurances, and to maintain a constant quality and availability of service at all times in northern Ontario? Is that not the responsibility and mandate of her ministry, at all times to ensure the availability and quality of the service, regardless of whether it is contracted out or not?

1440

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** I think the member knows service is being provided in the Timmins area. Arrangements have been made so that the air ambulance service which is so important to the people of northern Ontario is being maintained.

**Mr. Pope:** Can the minister confirm that Air Ontario was allowed to assign its air ambulance service contract to Voyageur Airways and that the Ministry of Health assumed no role for the transition period, to maintain the quality and availability of service in the transition time between the removal of Air Ontario from the contract providing the service until the time Voyageur Airways assumed that service?

Can the minister confirm there was less than half the normal committed personnel in the transition period to deliver this service, that the dedicated aircraft could not be used because the personnel did not have the available certification to operate the jet aircraft that were sitting in the hangars in Timmins and were therefore using



replacement propeller-driven aircraft, and that these pilots were not used to landing on airstrips in this region in northern Ontario? Is the minister not responsible for that kind of transition period?

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. It seems there are quite a number of questions there.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** The ministry has a contract with Voyageur. Voyageur has provided charter air ambulance services for a number of years; in fact, it has provided services to the Ministry of Health since 1977. The member will know that contracts change from time to time, but that the standards and requirements of the contracts do not, and there is a valid contract between the ministry and Voyageur.

The questions he raises are all very good questions that should be answered and responded to. I believe the Canadian Aviation Safety Board will be addressing all of those issues as they relate specifically to this unfortunate and tragic incident. I want him to know that I believe it is very important the facts come out.

**Mr. Pope:** We agree with the Minister of Health that all the facts should come out. She knows very well that the air safety investigation will delve exclusively into the cause of the crash, and not into the surrounding circumstances of the obligation of the Ministry of Health to maintain quality and availability of service to residents of northern Ontario, and to have a smooth transition from one operator to another that maintains those quality standards.

The minister will now know from her conversations in Timmins yesterday that four hours before his death, Ian Harris contacted Kevin Vincent, the news director of a local television station, and made very specific allegations about what was happening that very day with respect to this service in the city of Timmins. The minister knows this. The minister has heard the two opposition parties on this matter.

Will she now have a full and complete public inquiry over and above the coroner's inquiry and over and above the air safety inquiry? Will she have a full public inquiry into this accident and the ministry's handling of this transition period and the assignment of this contract from Air Ontario to Voyageur Airways? If it is found that ministry staff—

**Mr. Speaker:** Minister.

**Mr. Pope:** —were negligent in not supervising this transition, will she resign because that is what she is responsible for?

**Mr. Speaker:** Order; minister.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** This is a very difficult time for the families, friends and colleagues of the four people who were killed; one a very experienced pilot. I know the allegations the member is making will cause undue pain to that family. I feel for them because I believe the investigation that is under way is extremely appropriate and that all of those questions and concerns will be answered and answered appropriately.

I call upon him, during this very difficult time, to show some sensitivity for those families of professional people who I believe will be hurt by the kinds of unfounded allegations that may be brought forward at this difficult time.

#### METROPOLITAN TORONTO CONVENTION CENTRE

**Mr. Callahan:** My question is to the Minister of Tourism and Recreation.

**Mr. Wildman:** He's back.

**Mr. B. Rae:** The member looks like he has had a hard time—

**Mr. Callahan:** Thank you. I survived Hurricane Keith. I did not realize—

**Mr. Speaker:** And the question is to which minister?

**Mr. Callahan:** It is to the Minister of Tourism and Recreation, Mr. Speaker. I had not realized the Metropolitan Toronto Convention Centre was under our aegis until I was going through the estimates. I noticed in the estimates that there were certain moneys allocated to the Metro convention centre. I also noticed in reading the fine newspapers of this province that the Metro convention centre was doing very well. I would like to know, if the newspapers are correct and the convention centre is doing well, why we allocated money to the Metro convention centre.

**Hon. Mr. O'Neil:** May I first say to the member for Brampton South that the Metropolitan Toronto Convention Centre is very profitable for the province. The amount the member talks about in the 1988-89 estimates relates to government initiatives around the Toronto Economic Summit, which were funded through the centre. Part was for the temporary renovations for the leaders' summit meeting room and the balance was for rental of the centre for the summit.

I would like to add that the centre's facilities were widely acclaimed for how well they served both the leaders and the media. This was the first summit location able to accommodate the summit conference and the full media facilities under the same roof. I might also say that I was just

looking through my newspaper clippings and on this particular article the headlines read, "Toronto Centre Packs in Delegates," and, "Gaining Reputation as North American Jewel."

The exact figures of the Metropolitan Toronto Convention and Visitors Association state that \$460 million was spent by 540,000 convention delegates attending 743 meetings in Toronto.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you. I do not know if that will bring forth a supplementary. No? Oh; the minister has already answered the supplementary; fine.

#### UNDERSERVICED AREA PROGRAM

**Mr. Hampton:** My question is for the Minister of Health. In reviewing the statistics for the underserviced area program, a program the minister seems to be very proud of, I note that in December 1987 there were 17 communities in northern Ontario that were looking for a doctor. They were still looking in March 1988 and they are still looking today, in December 1988, for a doctor for their community. There are 17 of them and they go from the extreme northwest to the extreme northeast and everything in the middle.

With these kinds of statistics, will the minister agree now that more is needed than just the underserviced area program in terms of getting enough doctors to northern Ontario and keeping them there to do the job?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** In fact, we have spent quite a bit of time during estimates discussing the issue. While we recognize there is sufficient medical physician manpower in the province, we have geographic difficulties, distribution difficulties, particularly through the north and in rural communities.

But we know that the underserviced area program has been making a significant impact in the north. We know there has been a 17 per cent increase in the number of personnel, physicians particularly, working in the north. There has been an increase in the number of bursaries. In fact, more than 800 doctors, dentists and other health care professionals work in 218 designated underserviced areas.

**Mr. Hampton:** I keep asking the question. I ask it in estimates and I ask it here so that we can perhaps get an answer. The minister can find all kinds of statistics that indicate, yes, doctors go north. They may stay there for a year; they may stay there for 18 months, and then they leave. The fact of the matter is that these communities have been looking for a year. In fact, there are more communities now, such as Geraldton and Dryden, that do not need just one doctor, do not

need two additional doctors, but need three or four. The situation in those communities is getting worse, not better.

What does the minister plan to do? She has been given all kinds of recommendations, by the Ontario Medical Association and by the deans of the medical schools, on how she can help the situation. What, in addition to the underserviced area program, is she going to do to help these communities with basic health care?

1450

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** I think the member knows my concern for appropriate future manpower planning so that we can meet the needs of northern and rural Ontario specifically. That was the reason that we established the northern manpower planning committee, which I announced recently in Sudbury, so that we could identify areas of priority.

He should know as well that discussions are ongoing now with the deans of the faculties of medicine to discuss training opportunities throughout the north, so that young physicians will seek opportunities in the north after they have had an opportunity to gain experience through their training programs. I am very optimistic that the co-operation that we will receive from the schools of medicine will result in training for the needs of Ontario in the future.

#### PROPOSED HOSPITAL MERGER

**Mr. Eves:** I also have a question for the Minister of Health. On Tuesday of this week she responded, to a question about the proposed merger between Wellesley Hospital and Sunnybrook Medical Centre, that she was not unduly concerned about a reduction of acute care beds because, to quote her, "We have to look at innovative and creative ways of maintaining and enhancing the levels of service for the people of this province."

I want to make sure that I have this clear. Would she try to answer the question, for a change? Is the minister telling us that spending \$365 million of the taxpayers' money to eliminate over 200 acute care beds in Metropolitan Toronto is, in her opinion, an innovative and creative way of maintaining and enhancing the health care system for the people of Ontario?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** The proposal that the member refers to is a proposal from two hospitals and the University of Toronto, which have told me that they believe that the sum of the merger of the two in a centre of excellence will in fact enhance service delivery. We are reviewing that proposal.



The very fact that the member is asking the question he is asking displays a complete lack of understanding of how health care has changed in the past and will change in the future.

**Mr. Eves:** I do not need any lectures from the Minister of Health. Maybe she could start spending some time with the people who deliver health care services in Ontario.

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** You have no supplementary?

**Mr. Eves:** I have a supplementary. If the seals are through feeding, maybe I could ask it.

**Mr. Speaker:** Place your supplementary.

**Mr. Eves:** The Minister of Health told us on Tuesday, and she has told us again today, that new technologies mean that "beds are no longer the benchmark," to quote her, of the health care system. Nobody suggested they were the benchmark. However, she told us on May 5, 1988: "In 1985, with some of the technological advances, the planners were telling us we could expect a decline in the number of procedures performed. In fact, the opposite has occurred."

There is an increase in demand, a demand for more jobs. That was with respect to cardiovascular surgery. She responded to that demand. After we asked questions for months in the House, in June she gave us more beds. Now she is telling us that new technologies mean that we need fewer beds and we should spend almost \$400 million of the taxpayers' money to do so.

**Mr. Speaker:** Do you have a question?

**Mr. Eves:** Let me get this straight. Is that what the minister is doing?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** I think it is important that the member get it straight, because we are talking about very specialized cardiac services in tertiary care centres which are very appropriate and can be delivered only on an inpatient basis. The practice of medicine has changed. Technologies are now letting us do things like cataract surgery, 70 per cent of which is now done on an outpatient basis. Before, you needed one person and one bed for five days; now you can provide the service to five people in one day on an outpatient basis. Lithotripsy, for which you used to have to be in hospital for 14 to 20 days, is now being done on an outpatient basis.

Surely it makes sense, as the experts and the planners are telling me, to identify what the hospitals do best and require in patient care and allow them to do that and take the pressure off them by allowing for the reallocation of resources from inpatient to outpatient, to enhance

care where technology is allowing us to provide services in alternative ways.

I agree. The member should learn and understand what is happening, because he is out of touch.

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Once again, I am just waiting while you are wasting time. It will soon be over. We will just wait.

## LITERACY PROGRAMS

**Mr. Owen:** I have a question for the Minister of Correctional Services. During the years I was defending people charged with criminal matters, I noticed time and again that the accused had difficulties with being articulate, reading and writing, the very basic skills. Time and again I realized that the hostility they showed towards society was rooted somewhat in this lack of education.

I know the minister has introduced literacy programs in our jails and institutions looking after incarceration. I wonder if he could update us as to how extensive the program is and what kind of moneys are being expended in this direction.

**Hon. Mr. Ramsay:** The member is quite right. We really do find in surveys of people under our supervision that, from time to time, up to 40 per cent of the people under our care are functionally illiterate, meaning unable to read at a grade 9 level.

We have many delivery systems in which we afford programs to those under our care. The most popular one, and the one we are very proud of, is the individual contracts we enter into with local boards of education. This funding is supplied by the Minister of Education (Mr. Ward), for which we are very grateful. In total, we spend \$3.4 million on education, and that does not include the cost of the money provided by the ministry in those local programs.

## PETITIONS

### ANIMALS FOR RESEARCH

**Mr. Wildman:** I have a petition signed by approximately 20,000 residents of Ontario:

"To the Honourable Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Each year, thousands of animals suffer and die slow, painful deaths in laboratory tests of cosmetics and household products.

"These tests are cruel and not required by any provincial or federal law.

"Safe alternative methods of testing such products do exist; methods that do not involve the use of animals, but do provide reliable results.

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario to pass into law a bill prohibiting the use of animals in cosmetic and product testing."

#### NATUROPATHY

**Mr. Ballinger:** I have a petition:

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario....

"We petition the Ontario Legislature to call on the government to introduce legislation that would guarantee naturopaths the right to practise their art and science to the fullest without prejudice or harassment."

It is signed by 50 residents.

#### SENIOR CITIZENS' APARTMENTS

**Mr. Harris:** I am here today with the right petition. The last thing I wanted to do was to introduce the same petition twice. I do have the right one.

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"Whereas in 1973, the Ontario Housing Corp. constructed a senior citizen complex, consisting of a senior citizen apartment building situated at 135 Worthington Street West, in the city of North Bay, and whereas it has come to our attention that senior citizen apartments have been rented to nonseniors, be it resolved that we the undersigned support the establishment of a regulation whereby senior citizen apartments be made available to seniors only."

It is signed by a goodly number of very concerned senior citizens from this building. I, too, have affixed my signature to this petition.

1500

#### REPORT BY COMMITTEE

##### STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Mr. Epp from the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly reported the following resolution:

That supply in the following amount and to defray the expenses of the Office of the Assembly be granted to Her Majesty for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1989:

Office of the Assembly:

Office of the Assembly program,  
\$79,674,100.

#### MOTION

##### PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

Hon. Mr. Conway moves that Mr. Keyes and Mr. Offer, and Mr. Poirier and Mr. McGuigan, exchange places respectively in the order of precedence for private members' public business and that, notwithstanding standing order 71(h), the requirement for notice be waived with respect to ballot item 49.

Motion agreed to.

#### ORDERS OF THE DAY

House in committee of supply.

##### ESTIMATES, MINISTRY OF HEALTH (continued)

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** I would like to ask the minister a couple of questions, if I could get her to take her seat. She could listen when she is standing up, but I do not expect her to listen and walk and stand up at the same time.

I would like to ask the minister to make some comments about the Provincial Auditor's report, since she was not in the House yesterday, she was up north, and the serious comments that were made in the auditor's report about complaints about hospitals, patient complaints and the lack of adequate response.

I guess the first question I would like to ask is: Does the minister agree with the comments of the auditor on page 101 of the report, where he says, "Clearly, the Minister of Health has the ultimate responsibility for the operations of hospitals, including the quality of care provided and the cost-effectiveness of their administration"?

If, in fact, the minister agrees with that statement, and I am specifically referring to "the ultimate responsibility for the operations of hospitals, including quality of care," why do she and her ministry constantly respond to patients and to anyone else who complains on their behalf about the quality of care that they should direct their complaints to the local boards of hospitals and that the ministry has no role in terms of investigating complaints directed at hospitals?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** In fact, the member raises a very good question, and I think it bears some discussion of how our system works, how the hospitals operate, the responsibility of the boards and also the role of the self-governing professions in this province, because I think it is very important for everyone to understand how many partners there are, how this works and what the ultimate responsibility of the minister is.



One of the things I have said on a number of occasions is that I believe that accountability and quality assurance are extremely important, and if I had to set my priorities, my priorities are always, as I have said, public safety, accountability and quality assurance.

The auditor makes a very good point when he says that the Minister of Health has ultimate responsibility. That ultimate responsibility is reflected in the fact that where the minister has a concern about patient care, quality of care, management of the hospitals or governance of the hospitals, the powers of the Public Hospitals Act permit the minister—as I did this past year, in fact—to send in an investigator under the Public Hospitals Act to report to the minister the actual situation as it relates to patient care, management and administration of the hospital and governance issues.

Upon receipt of the investigator's report, where the minister feels that the concerns are justified, then under that act the minister can send in a supervisor, thank the board for their service and dismiss them, appoint an interim board and actually have the supervisor run that facility. Thus, the powers under the Public Hospitals Act are very clear.

The member also raises the question of quality assurance. When we talk about the Independent Health Facilities Act—and I say that we want the same level of quality assurance in an independent health facility as we presently have in a hospital—it is very important to note that quality assurance means access to patients' files on a peer review basis to make sure that there is quality assurance.

There are quality assurance mechanisms set up in hospitals today that are very sophisticated, as well as utilization review committees. When the minister sends in an investigator and inspector under the Public Hospitals Act, access to that information is made available so that there can be quality assurance. Accountability under that act is very, very clear and the powers are very broad.

The minister has similar powers under the Nursing Homes Act. When there is a concern about patient quality, ministry investigators, inspectors and assessors can go into the nursing home and review the charts to make sure that quality and appropriate care levels for patients are being provided. That is the reason why, when we receive a patient complaint, the first thing the ministry does is allow the hospital the opportunity to respond to that complaint. I would tell the members that I take the Provincial Auditor's comments very seriously and believe that we

have to do a better job in monitoring the results of those investigations to determine that the patients are satisfied with the response from the hospital and that the complaint has been addressed.

Many of the complaints that are mentioned in the auditor's report relate to the care provided by the professionals. That is a very different case. The way the professions are governed in this province is by self-regulation. Each of the recognized professions has its own disciplinary college: the physicians have the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario, the nurses have the College of Nurses of Ontario, the pharmacists have the Ontario College of Pharmacists and so on.

Once I receive the recommendations from Alan Schwartz, a lawyer appointed by the previous government from five years ago, we will have an opportunity to look at all of the professions and the several pieces of legislation that are in place today. The recommendations that Mr. Schwartz will be bringing forward will have a significant impact on how the professions govern themselves, what accountability government requires of the professions, and the issues around patient complaints will be raised once again in that forum.

The question that is raised is a very good one, because it happens that I do get letters from patients complaining or having concerns about the care they have received from a professional. At the present time, as minister I must refer all of those complaints on a referral basis to the college of the professional against whom the complaint has been identified. Then the college conducts its investigation, because it is the disciplinary body. The minister has no power whatever to interfere with that process.

There is in place the Health Disciplines Board. Where a patient is not satisfied with the response from the college, he or she can appeal to that board, which is separate and autonomous from the ministry. I think it is very important that people understand the degree of self-regulation and the empowerment of the profession in giving to them the responsibility for protection of the public.

#### 1510

In my discussions with Mr. Schwartz, I told him that what I would be looking for from him in his report were recommendations on how we could make sure of protection of the public and on how quality assurance could be enhanced and to discuss the future role of the Health Disciplines Board, which is a body of public representatives, not of professionals. They are a

lay board as opposed to the professional governing bodies.

I take very seriously all the recommendations of the Provincial Auditor, particularly those which relate to accountability and to a complaint process for patients, and I look forward to having the opportunity in this House to discuss at length the alternatives that we, as legislators, have to ensure the highest level of both public accountability and protection of the public in any piece of legislation which is brought forward.

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** Some of what the minister said I have heard many times before and some of what the minister said is simply inaccurate. For the minister to say that when a patient complains about either the conditions in a particular hospital or the quality of care in a particular hospital, it is dealt with in a similar way to complaints from nursing homes is simply nonsense. There are not inspectors who go around and investigate each complaint.

If I file with her ministry a complaint about a nursing home, I know that the inspection branch is going to go out and I am going to get a report from that inspection. If I file a complaint about a hospital, I know that I am going to get back from her a letter saying that she has sent my complaint off to the board and that I am going to have the people I am complaining about responding to my complaint about their institution, which is simply not adequate.

I think what the auditor is saying, when he talks about 2,600 public complaints in 1986-87, is that there should be some system in place that holds the hospitals more accountable, that ultimately her ministry has the responsibility and that therefore she has to accept some of that responsibility to hold the hospital boards accountable.

I agree that with our system of self-governing professions there is a system of complaining. I think the minister, to be fair, would also understand—certainly the government House leader when he was in opposition used to always complain—about the system of complaints against doctors, lawyers and other professions. Whenever there was any amendment to the Health Disciplines Act, he was good for speaking for at least an hour to an hour and a half, and the current Treasurer (Mr. R. F. Nixon), if we mentioned lawyers, was good for three or four hours.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** Our House leader?

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** Your present House leader and the Treasurer as well.

There has to be a new system—

**Hon. Mr. Conway:** You are not mixing up the Treasurer and Conway with lawyers, are you?

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** Well, lawyers and doctors are all the same when it comes to dealing with complaints.

The minister should understand that there has to be a new system put in place to deal with complaints against professions. Specifically on that, I would like the minister to tell us today how much money has been spent to date on Alan Schwartz and his committee reviewing the health professions legislation, which was supposed to take a relatively short period of time and has been going on now for several years. Could the minister at least give us the most recent figure that she has of how much money has been spent on this process and paid directly to Alan Schwartz?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** I would be pleased to get the specifics for the member and present them to him. I do not have them at my fingertips at this time, as far as the actual cumulative number is concerned, except to say that the review has been going on for some five years. I am hoping to have a report, which will be in the form of draft legislation, from Mr. Schwartz before the end of this year or, at the latest, early in the next year since it is already December 1. Time sure flies.

The review has been going on for some five years and the recommendations should be in. I have made a commitment to all the groups that will be named in his recommendations that I will meet with them prior to making any comment on his recommendations, to make sure that—given the fact that I have been Minister of Health for the last 14 months—they will feel they have been listened to. Then I expect that the legislation will be available for the scrutiny of the House on an individual basis while I am meeting with the groups, and I know that it will result in much discussion in these chambers.

The member did raise an important part of this as well, and I think it is important that we take the opportunity to clarify it. I did not say that the nursing home legislation and the public hospital legislation were the same. In fact, what I said was that they were very different. I said that there are processes for inspection under both acts by the ministry, but they are different processes.

He is quite correct: The nursing home legislation has ministry officials actively inspecting and responding to complaints, usually on a peer review basis. We make sure that the investigators, assessors and inspectors whom we send in under the Nursing Homes Act are very familiar with patient care and quality-of-care require-



ments. The Public Hospitals Act is very different.

There is a reason for its being very different. The Public Hospitals Act has a medical advisory committee. It also has a very sophisticated quality assurance mechanism built into the hospital so that complaints and concerns which go to the boards that are accountable for the management of that hospital, not only for funds and administration but also for the committees that are established, have the opportunity, when a complaint comes in, to respond first.

I want to tell the member, as I have said before, that the ministry is working right now to improve its system of tracking and monitoring patient complaints so that we can be assured that those complaints have been responded to appropriately. If the minister and the ministry have concerns about quality assurance in a public hospital, we can, and as the member knows I did, this year, send an inspector into a public hospital who then reported back on the state of the quality of care, management, administration and governance issues. So I think it is important that we differentiate and understand that different pieces of legislation in the province give the minister different powers for responding to quality of care, protection of the public and accountability issues.

Also, I have made a commitment in this House and outside that we will be opening up the Public Hospitals Act. It is an act which is 40 years old. We know that much has transpired in the last 40 years and that the act is seriously out of date. We have been through the regulations, making changes. There was recently quite a large change to regulation 865 which, after years of consultation, was amended. They were management regulations. We are now consulting on regulations which will give nurses a greater say in resource allocation and participation on hospital committees, to respond to the changing role of nurses and the importance of having them participate as important members of the health care team, and being involved in management and resource allocation within hospitals.

We also want to be very clear about our regulations and as a result of the conjoint review of the 23 hospitals which had repeated deficits—the Provincial Auditor's recommendations, in fact, were very similar to the recommendations of the conjoint review. Actually, the auditor, I believe, inspected prior to the conjoint review. Their conclusions highlight the need for change in our funding procedures and being able to be clear to our public hospitals, not only about

funding but also about our procedures and guidelines, our regulations and requirements of the board in the way of governance and all aspects of management in the hospitals.

The member would know that we are working with the Ontario Hospital Association co-operatively. We are working with the hospitals in this province, not only to develop a new funding formula—we are working on an interim formula at this time, as we move to a fair and appropriate funding of hospitals—but also we are consulting with them right now for some changes in the regulations under the Public Hospitals Act to require the kind of accountability and change that we can accomplish by regulation until such time as we are prepared to proceed with new public hospitals legislation.

I am hoping we will see that new legislation begin to proceed through the legislative process, hopefully within a year, but we know how important it is that we have consultation and input during the drafting of new legislation.

**1520**

There was one other point that the auditor made that I think bears discussion and that I would like to comment on because I agree with him. I am moving now to make sure that the hospital foundations will be required to submit audited financial statements annually and that the ministry will take further steps, as appropriate, to recover any funds that were inappropriately transferred.

I believe that the operating funds, which are patient care dollars, must be used for the purposes intended. As the member knows, the ministry had a requirement that hospitals receive ministry approval prior to any transfer of funds to foundations. I think he knows, and the other members of the House know, how strongly I feel about the hospitals receiving approval prior to starting new programs, adding new staff or transferring funds.

I want the member to know that I am quite satisfied by the level of co-operation, not only between the ministry and the Ontario Hospital Association but also between the ministry and the individual hospitals of this province. I think we are making real progress in trying to work together to resolve the many issues and the many challenges that face us.

I believe it is important that we have a level of accountability from our public hospitals, from their boards and trustees, who work on a volunteer basis within their community. I have great confidence that they wish to be as accountable as the Provincial Auditor believes

they should be and that these issues will be able to be resolved.

As well, we are reviewing specific examples cited in the Provincial Auditor's report, and I want to assure the member that we will proceed on any cases which we find require additional attention. I hope that answers his questions on the auditor's report, but if he has any others I am always pleased to respond.

I have just received a note from ministry officials on the member's question regarding the health professions legislation review under Alan Schwartz. To the end of October, the cost of this five-year task force is \$1,945,815.99, a considerable amount of money, almost \$2 million. I believe this represents five years of very important work, the results of which I am hoping to have very soon. I hope these will then begin a process of discussion with the professions which will result in greater public accountability, greater quality assurance, and also an acknowledgement of how the professions have changed. Not only has the practice of medicine changed, but in fact the professions have changed.

We have seen new professions emerge. We have seen great changes in the professions in this province, and I am hopeful that the discussions, which I believe will be very productive both in and outside the Legislature, will lead us to an era where we acknowledge that, as I have said in my speeches, consumers will have an understanding of how our professions govern themselves through self-regulation and a greater awareness of the role of the professions and the greater choices that are available to us among the professions. I believe that the work that has been done for the past five years will prove to be very valuable.

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** The way the minister responds—I know she likes to eat away at the clock—she probably should have gone to law school, because she can speak as long as a professor at a university or as long as a lawyer.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** But I say such important things.

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** Eating away at the clock is what the minister is attempting to do. Anyway, I have one more question and then I am going to maintain my sanity and leave the chamber.

Will the minister be filing with the Legislature, the cost of the Schwartz committee?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** I just read it out.

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** Sorry?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** You sit down and I will do it again.

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** Okay. Just the one thing, the amount.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** On numerous occasions I rise in the House and I say things like, "You don't listen." I just finished repeating for the member that I had the figures from very able ministry staff. I am pleased to read them into the record again. I will read them again if he will listen. All right?

As of the end of October, the total amount spent on the five years of Mr. Schwartz's health professions legislation review is \$1,945,815.99. That represents almost five years of work and almost \$2 million, a very significant sum of money for what I hope will be an important report which will receive the attention of this Legislature and give us an opportunity to discuss many of the issues that we are discussing now in estimates.

Before the member stands up, I would like to say just one thing. There are three opportunities for questions in this Legislature and in these chambers. There is the opportunity in question period where Mr. Speaker is very firm about how short our answers have to be. There is the opportunity in estimates to look in depth at many of the issues and questions that members raise. There is the opportunity when we table legislation in the House and go through the legislative process, on second reading, on third reading and at committee hearings, to look at proposals and changes in a further in-depth way.

I am a little concerned at the suggestion that estimates is not the forum for answering questions in an in-depth way, because I believe it is. I am happy to answer the questions. I am quite frustrated that over the course of the past number of hours on Health estimates a lot of questions have been raised. I have the questions and I have the answers. I am prepared to answer the questions today and would ask the members of the opposition to give me an opportunity to do that without suggesting in some way that it is inappropriate for these responses to questions to be detailed.

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** Perhaps what the minister should do is table her notes. They could be printed in Hansard in whatever way she wants and we could read them.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** That's an order paper question. Now there's a fourth way. I will discuss order paper questions.

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** Order paper questions? We never get them answered at all.

I would like to ask the minister one final question. I am amazed at the \$2 million that has



been spent on this review, which was supposed to take a much shorter period of time. I think that Mr. Schwartz, between the select committee on Ontario Hydro affairs a few years ago and this little project that he has taken on on behalf of this government, started by the previous government, certainly has done extremely well by the taxpayers of Ontario. I am not questioning his competence and his ability. But it has taken much longer than it should have and is much more expensive than it need be.

I do have a suggestion for the minister that I would ask her to seriously consider. When the final report comes in, I think she has to admit that there has been one serious group of people who have been neglected by this process, and that is the consumers of this province. The professions have been involved on a regular basis, through consultation, feedback and groupings in order to negotiate with one another and so forth, and while they are not all satisfied, they certainly have been involved.

Generally speaking, consumers have not been involved. I want to suggest to the minister that what should happen is that when there is draft legislation, that legislation should then be brought back to the Legislature and introduced in the form of a green paper, as was done with the children's legislation a few years ago by the then Minister of Community and Social Services, Frank Drea. That green paper was sent out for public hearings and consultation, with another report by a legislative committee given to the minister, and then final legislation was brought in for first, second and third reading.

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That would give an opportunity for members of the Legislature to have involvement and certainly would give an opportunity for consumers to become involved before the legislation was introduced as a matter of principle from the government. Instead, it would be sent out for consultation. I think that would be a much better process.

I think it also would be very helpful to members of the Legislature if, instead of introducing legislation which the government has decided on, draft legislation was sent out in a green paper. It would give members of the Legislature, who have also, obviously, been shut out of this process up until now, an opportunity to become familiar with it and an opportunity, through legislative hearings, to become familiar with the many, many issues that are going to arise out of this legislation, which will take a fair amount of time to deal with in committee.

I think it would actually speed up the process but would offer another avenue for consultation with the consumers and a role for the members of the Legislature, while the government would not be locked into a specific piece of legislation. We could instead have a report back to the minister, as we did with the children's legislation a few years ago with Frank Drea, as I say. I would ask the minister to consider that process.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** I think it might be important to take just a couple of minutes on some of the history of this very important review process.

The Schwartz health professions legislation review was begun some five years ago by the previous government. Two years ago—or actually, I believe, when my colleague the former Minister of Health sought advice from the professions on the value of the work that was being done by Mr. Schwartz—there was a response from the professions that the work that was being done was important, was valuable and should continue. We made the decision to ask Mr. Schwartz to continue and to complete his work.

When I became minister some 14 months ago, I met with him and asked him when he felt that his recommendations would be complete. In fact, he has informed me that he is hopeful to have them to me by the end of this year. It is now December 1 and I expect that they will be available very shortly.

In fact, there was some consumer involvement in the process, although I would agree with the member opposite that the primary focus was discussions with the professions involved, and certainly there were some decisions made as the process went through its course. I have been told by the professions that this was a good process. They are very supportive of the process itself.

I understand that consumers were consulted: organizations and associations, the Ombudsman and Canadian consumer associations. Mr. Schwartz spoke with some individuals, but certainly not in a broad context; it was limited. Some patients' rights groups were consulted as well for their input.

Since what we are going to be receiving in the form of a report is quite unusual—it will be presented in the form of draft legislation—the commitment that I have made to the professions that are going to be included in the legislation is that I will receive the draft legislation and I will not comment on it until I have spoken with all of those professional organizations. However, what I will do, in fact is that I will encourage



circulation and discussion in numerous forms. Perhaps some groups will want to invite Mr. Schwartz to come and talk about it as I am discussing that with the professions.

I think it is important then to talk about how the legislative process begins, because there are many people in the province who do not understand that process. In fact, the process in the House, as the member knows, is the tabling of legislation for first reading. You then have second reading. It can go to full committee for discussions, if members wish, and then back for third reading.

I will take very seriously the suggestion from the member as I meet with all of those professional groups. I will seek their advice as well, because I believe this will be a very important change which will be proposed in this province. It is important that consumers and the people of this province understand what self-regulation is, what the proposals are that are being made, so that they be as involved as they can be. I believe very strongly in empowerment of the individual and empowerment of the community.

I have said here in this House that as we work to achieve our vision of health care—which is equity and access to effective, quality health care, the very best that we can afford, as close to home as possible—the tests for achieving that vision must always be quality of care, quality of life, dignity of the individual and empowerment of the individual and of communities, by giving them information so that they can participate more fully in making decisions about their own health, and understanding the role of the professions, how they are governed and how they discipline themselves. The regulatory process, I think, is very important.

I see the conclusion of this five-year process by Mr. Schwartz as being very, very significant. I intend to make sure that all of the recommendations, in the form of draft legislation, are published and available. I will seek comment. I want to give the member my assurance on that matter.

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** All I was suggesting is that if the minister looks at the process that was followed with the children's legislation a few years ago, there is another process. I understand that bills are introduced for first reading and then debated in this place on second reading. That is the normal process, but there are other ways of doing it.

His report could be reviewed by the ministry then tabled in the House and referred out to the

standing committee on social development, so that the draft legislation could be reviewed before the minister locks herself into a particular position and so that members of the Legislature could become familiar with the process and have input and report back to her, which I think would be appropriate.

This is going to be a major change. This is a very important piece of legislation. It is going to be a very complex piece of legislation. It is going to be a piece of legislation that I would not want to sit on committee and listen to for the next number of months, because it is going to be a very difficult piece of legislation as well.

But if she wants members to understand it and be involved in it and offer an opportunity to the public to become involved more openly in the process than they have with the \$2-million Schwartz commission, then she might be able to do that by using that draft legislation and referring it out to committee as a beginning step.

Then, when the report is written, the minister can either reject or accept some of the recommendations from the committee and bring in her bill for first, second and third reading and we can proceed with a piece of legislation which is developed more in a consensus than on a partisan line, which really is not applicable to this type of legislation. That is all I am suggesting.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** I have said to the member that I am certainly willing to consider and to discuss his point of view with the professions and with the interested groups with whom I will be meeting. I would certainly consider his request.

I think it might be a good idea at this time, since I know that the people of the province do watch estimates on television—although some of us who sit through it wonder if they sit through all of the hours and hours of estimates, but I know many do find it interesting—since we are talking about the health professions legislation review, it might be helpful to place on the record the list of the professions that will be covered by Mr. Schwartz's legislation, and also the criteria that were established through the review process for self-regulation.

The list of professions to be regulated is as follows: audiologists, chiroprodists, chiropractors, dental hygienists, dental technicians, dentists, denture therapists, dieticians, massage therapists, medical laboratory technologists, midwives, nurses, nursing assistants, occupational therapists, ophthalmologic dispensers, optometrists, osteopaths, pharmacists, physicians, physiotherapists, podiatrists, psychologists, ra-



diological technicians, respiratory technologists and speech language pathologists.

Of those, there are some that are not currently regulated. They are the audiologists, the dieticians, the medical laboratory technologists, midwives, occupational therapists, respiratory technologists and speech language pathologists. This shows just how much the professions have changed, with the emergence of new professions, when we see this list of professions to be regulated. It will be, I believe, a cumbersome piece of legislation as we look at all these different acts that are going to be proposed.

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The criteria for self-regulation are something else that I think is important to have on the record since this was a five-year process that Mr. Schwartz undertook. At one point, the criteria were established. There were nine points that were agreed to almost unanimously by the professions and the public that these were good criteria for self-regulation. I think it would be helpful to put them on the record right now.

The criteria for self-regulation under the health professions legislative review are as follows: (1) relevance to the Minister of Health, (2) risk of harm to patients, (3) the fact that the profession was not already supervised by regulated practitioners, (4) no alternative regulatory mechanism, (5) body of knowledge, (6) diploma or degree from recognized Canadian institution, (7) leadership's ability to favour the public interest—and let me underline that one, (8) likelihood of compliance by the self-regulated, and (9) sufficiency of membership size and willingness to contribute to the self-regulatory process.

I think these criteria are very appropriate. They are criteria against which all will be judged. The reason I mentioned item 7, which refers to public interest, is that I agree with the member for Windsor-Riverside (Mr. D. S. Cooke) and with all members of this House who acknowledge that it is the role of government to ensure public accountability, to ensure quality assurance, and that any changes to how professions are governed and regulated in this province must meet the public interest test.

Just as every member here is elected by the public, it is our role to speak for the public. We are the ones in this Legislature who act in the public interest. We are the ones who make sure that our legislation responds to that public interest test, to the accountability of public funds and to the quality assurance that our public and the people who send us to this Legislature expect from us.

I think it is important, through this estimates process, to put on the record that I consider that my role as Minister of Health is to at all times ensure the public interest, ensure safety of the public and ensure quality assurance and accountability of the resources which are given to the Ministry of Health. One of the things I have said is that what we have in place is very good and we should have confidence in that. But one of the reasons it is so good is that we are always trying to improve it. To have an opportunity in estimates to discuss many of those issues facing health care and affecting this province, and answer specifically the questions that are raised, is something which I believe is one of the finest elements of our democratic process.

I talked about three opportunities to answer questions. In fact, there are four. The fourth one is the opportunity for members to place questions in Orders and Notices. I know the frustration is often there that these are not answered as quickly as members would like. That is because the questions are usually quite complicated and require quite a bit of ministry staff time to compile the data.

Often it is very expensive to do that, but I think it is important that the public knows this is the time for ultimate public accountability for the spending estimates of the ministries and the government. I very much support this process and the opportunity to stand in my place and discuss the fact that we are spending \$12.7 billion on health care, slightly more than one third of the total provincial budget, that we have a significant commitment to effective, quality health care through the resources that the taxpayers of this province commit to it through their taxes.

I am pleased to begin now to answer some of those questions that were raised by the member for Parry Sound (Mr. Eves), although I know that some of the individual members of the House had additional questions that they wanted to put on the record. I would be willing to yield to allow them to place their questions so that their constituents will know that the questions have been asked, understanding that if that happens I will not have all of the time to answer in detail but will make the commitment that, as always, if members communicate with me on an individual basis, whether they do it through questions in Orders and Notices, through letters to my office, during question period time, I am always very pleased to answer their questions as fully as I may.

**Mr. Eves:** I have no objection. Obviously, one of the problems is that, for those of us who are critics, we always think the time in estimates is too short for the particular ministry, especially the largest ministry in the government. I certainly do not want to, nor do I intend to, prevent any other members in the Legislature from placing questions, but I would like to get the commitment from the minister that she will respond to the many questions that we did ask at the outset.

I do not think I should have to place order paper questions. I have already asked the questions; they are on the record in Hansard of November 14. As long as I can get the commitment from the minister that those questions will be answered shortly—obviously, perhaps, not during the time allotted in committee of supply—I would be satisfied with that.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** I think the appropriate response is that during estimates time questions are placed; I am happy to answer. I would be pleased to start now and respond to the questions that were specifically raised. Any questions which we do not have the opportunity to complete during estimates time, the member can raise again through order paper questions and during question period in the House. When we proceed through committee with specific pieces of legislation, questions can be raised then, as well.

I am very pleased now to start with the question raised when the member was discussing administrative costs, that there was an average increase in program administration in the neighbourhood of 16 per cent. The actual response to that—

**The Deputy Chairman:** The member for Parry Sound is still on the question of how we are going to proceed.

**Mr. Eves:** I am trying to be accommodating here; I am not trying to be difficult. There are, obviously, members who have been around here a lot longer than I have, but having been a member since 1981 and having sat through many estimates committee processes, having chaired at least a half a dozen committees of the Legislature and sat through the committee process, I believe the general practice is that if ministers do not have the time to respond to questions during the hours and minutes allotted for the particular estimates of that ministry, it is a common practice for the minister to undertake to respond to that member by way of writing.

I do not find it acceptable that questions can be asked and answers not given and we have to go through some other procedure, such as another

committee hearing, question period or order paper questions. I do not find that an acceptable response. If the minister is prepared to undertake that she is indeed going to provide us with responses—she says she has the responses available—surely it is not a difficult problem for her and her staff to accommodate all members, not just myself, who have asked questions.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** As I said before, I am pleased to begin now to answer as many questions as we possibly have time for in the time remaining. I will say to the member that many, many questions have been placed. Some have already been answered. I will certainly undertake to communicate as best I can in the many different forums that we have. If the member will just let me know specifically which are his priority areas, because there is such a tremendous amount of information it would be so much easier if I could just begin to answer and place it on the record here.

**The Deputy Chairman:** The member for Beaches-Woodbine has a point of order.

**Ms. Bryden:** On a point of order, Mr. Chairman: It seems very odd procedure for the minister to be planning, apparently, to go through all of these order paper questions and give us the answers now, when we have only an hour or so left. I have some questions on health and this is the first opportunity I have had to be able to attend the Ministry of Health estimates. I hope it will not happen that the minister will go through each one of these order paper questions.

I am sure they are very important questions, and I certainly sympathize with the member and other members of his party who have placed them and not received answers. It is not much help for the minister to stand up and say there are all these opportunities for us and then we find the opportunities are not really being given to us to get answers.

1550

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** I would be pleased to respond to the member for Beaches-Woodbine in this way: There are some questions that have been asked that will be very appropriate questions in Orders and Notices and I think that is the appropriate way to receive them. There are others that are specific local constituency types of questions, and I will undertake, if a member will let me know he has a specific interest, to respond.

There are some questions that were raised that are broad policy issues, requiring discussion from the policy point of view, which I will be



pleased to take the time now to discuss on an individual basis. I would be pleased to allow the member to place her question and will undertake to do my very best to respond, as I always do, to any question relating to a specific constituency issue or request.

**Mr. Eves:** As I have said on numerous occasions, I have no desire to interrupt the committee process. As a matter of fact, for the the last three days these estimates have been discussed in the House I have stood aside and permitted all kinds of members from all parties to ask questions. I am just telling the minister that the standing accommodation or tradition around here in an estimates process is that the minister will undertake to answer each and every question.

If she does not have time to do it during the time allotted for estimates, I do not see why the minister is being difficult about this. All she has to do is to agree to give her undertaking that she will respond to every question. They are all there in Hansard of November 14. She has already told us she has the answers, that her ministry staff has prepared them and she would like to have the time to give them, but unfortunately she is running out of time.

I am prepared to accommodate her, if she will give me the undertaking that she is going to answer each and every question I asked, not questions in Orders and Notices but during the estimates procedure the very first day the estimates were discussed in the Legislature on November 14. I do not see what is so difficult about this. It is a simple undertaking we can get from the minister: yes or no.

I can recall James Snow in many estimates procedures. I can go through a list of cabinet ministers as long as both of my arms. This is a normal, accepted practice around this place and I do not know why the minister is being difficult about it. She has the answers. Surely her staff can reproduce them.

**Hon. Mr. Conway:** I would like, just because I have been listening to this debate—I will not take any great amount of time. I have been here for over 13 years.

**Mr. Hampton:** Too long.

**Hon. Mr. Conway:** The member for Rainy River (Mr. Hampton) says perhaps too long and perhaps he is right.

I have heard the Minister of Health say that she will make every effort, both in the chamber now and in other ways, to answer all the questions. I have to say to my friend that I can remember having been through many sets of estimates with

his redoubtable colleague the former Minister of Education, and I can assure the honourable member we had much more spirited and lively exchanges across this island. I do not ever remember the good doctor offering to answer all my questions.

I want to make clear, on behalf of the government, that our practice is to accommodate members both in the chamber and through other means to respond to all their questions. The minister has, I think, given that commitment. I simply suggest that we get on with the committee's business and let all members, particularly those who are new to the debate like our distinguished senior colleague the member for Beaches-Woodbine (Ms. Bryden), participate in the debate.

I repeat that I think I heard the minister say she is quite prepared to answer in this chamber and through other means the questions put by the very inquiring member for Parry Sound and all other members.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** I would like to thank the government House leader because he has represented my position quite accurately. I would be pleased to get on with the estimates discussion.

**Ms. Bryden:** Mr. Chairman, are we discussing a point of order at the moment?

**The Deputy Chairman:** We have exhausted that, I would think. The minister has indicated she is prepared to answer questions for the remaining 47 minutes.

**Ms. Bryden:** Except that the questions she is going to answer in the 47 minutes, as she says, in the House or out of it, will be all the questions that have been asked in these estimates or in Orders and Notices that have not been answered. This could take us maybe three or four days, which means that anybody who is here to ask a new question will not have any time, if what the government House leader has said is correct. The question is, will there be any time in these 45 minutes for me to ask at least one question?

**Mr. Eves:** I would like to remind the chair and the minister of the minister's commitment, in Hansard on November 14, right at the outset of these estimates when I asked for a very specific commitment. I did it for exactly the reason we are seeing right now. We have 46 minutes left in these estimates, which were 13 hours. In effect, what the minister is now saying is: "Too bad. If I don't have time in the next 46 minutes to respond to your questions, then you'll have to do it by way of some other forum, by way of questions in Orders and Notices, committee, etc."

She gave an undertaking on November 14 to respond to every question I asked. She has 45 minutes left to do so. I am willing to accept her undertaking to do it in writing. I find her conduct rather unbecoming for a minister, quite frankly.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** On a point of order, Mr. Chairman: In fact, the categorization by the critic for the third party is not a true categorization of the reality. I think it is important to have that on the record. At no time did I ever say what he just said. If members read the record in Hansard—there are also the comments of the government House leader—in fact I said I would be as accommodating as I could be in making sure the member had responses and answers to his many questions in the many different ways and forums that are available to us.

I would be pleased now to respond to the questions from the member for Beaches-Woodbine. I would say that the categorization of the critic for the third party is unbecoming for a Health critic, a member of this Legislature who knows his categorization is pushing the limit of perception, even.

**The Deputy Chairman:** We have a problem I may characterize as a choice between the nature and kinds of answers and the time available for answers by the minister on the one hand, and on the other hand the request for additional questions to be placed before the minister. In view of that, I am going to rule that the member for Beaches-Woodbine shall have the floor for the purpose of placing additional questions to the minister, who shall thereafter, if time remains, answer as she sees fit in the House and outside the House.

**Mr. Eves:** On a point of personal privilege, Mr. Chairman: I want to read the undertaking and commitment from Hansard of November 14. I stated, "I would like to obtain an undertaking from the minister, however, at the outset of these estimates, that she will be responding to questions directed to her, not only from myself but my colleagues and the members of the official opposition as well, before the estimates process is completed."

That leaves the minister 43 minutes exactly. I wonder if that commitment might be forthcoming from the minister. The minister's response in its entirety was: "Yes. I would be delighted to." I expect every answer to be given in the next 42 minutes pursuant to her commitment. However, I am prepared to be reasonable and take her undertaking to provide them in writing and allow other members to place questions. I think she should answer those in writing, too, if she does

not get the time in the next 42 minutes. I have said my piece, Mr. Chairman.

**The Deputy Chairman:** That is not a point of personal privilege. The member for Beaches-Woodbine has the floor.

**Ms. Bryden:** There is a subject I have a great interest in and want to deal with; that is, the question of community health centres and health service organizations. While I will be asking some questions, I will be content if the answers come after the estimates are completed.

Not having been able to attend the other sittings of this committee of supply on Health estimates, this subject may have been dealt with to some extent already, but I would like to place some very specific questions about community health centres and health service organizations.

I think it is time the government put its money where its mouth is. The Liberals say they are redirecting efforts from the treatment of illness towards the promotion of health and the prevention of disease, and that they are providing community-based services, but they are spending less than one per cent of the entire Health budget on community health centres and health service organizations.

#### 1600

CHCs and HSOs are the only real existing alternative to fee-for-service medicine. They focus not just on treatment of illness, but on health promotion and on helping their clients to take control over their health and wellbeing. In 1983, when CHCs and HSOs were made permanent components of the health care system, there were 10 CHCs and 17 HSOs. As of June 1988—I do not have later figures—there were only 13 CHCs and 34 HSOs in operation. Their development has been strangled by the government's lack of commitment.

The government's lack of commitment in providing real community-based alternatives was indicated by an election announcement of the Premier (Mr. Peterson). He said he wanted to double the number of people served by CHCs and HSOs by 1992, but that means he only wants to see about 500,000 people have access to these services, which would be only four per cent of the population.

It seems to me it is time the government got serious about establishing real alternatives to the fee-based sick care system. I wanted to put to the minister some questions about where we are with CHCs and HSOs. Incidentally, there is an HSO operating in my riding. It has been operating for three or four years and is a community-based HSO, which means the decisions about what



services to offer are provided by a community-based group. It is trying to provide the kind of medicine the community wants, but it is only one of the 34 that were available in June.

I would like the minister to tell me, if she is in the House—

**Hon. Mr. Conway:** She is just under the gallery.

**Ms. Bryden:** Can the minister provide us with up-to-date statistics on the number of HSOs and CHCs in the province? I want them broken down so that they are identified as to which ones have a community board; the range of services each one provides, because some of them provide foot care and some of them provide well-baby care and things like that; the number that are connected with hospitals; the number that are independent centres in the community, operated by two or more physicians. Also, the number that are providing psychiatric or psychology services—things covered in these health professions the minister was mentioning that are providing a good deal of various kinds of health care and health services, so that we have a picture of what sorts of services they are providing.

I also want some sort of commitment as to how much money the minister is going to put into developing this very valuable kind of centre. For instance, the estimates under vote 1805 for the community health program has an increase of about \$42 million for community health services generally. This is not all HSOs and CHCs. If we could have a breakdown from that as to how much of that money is actually going to promoting HSOs and CHCs, that would be very valuable.

I think they are organizations that have been spoken about by past governments, from the days of Larry Grossman when he was Minister of Health and on up to the present Liberal government with its glowing promises in the two election campaigns as to how much it was going to put into preventive medicine. That is really the bottom line. It is also a more economical delivery of medical services.

I think it is time we looked at a much larger budget for these organizations and for the promotion of them, rather than just giving lipservice to the philosophy that they are a valuable form of health care delivery and an alternative to the fee-for-service system. We may need some considerable expansion of that kind of delivery of health service if we are going to get health costs under control. Could the minister give us some sort of picture of where we are going on those organizations.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** I would be pleased to talk for a few moments about health service organizations and community health centres. Our Premier made a commitment to double the number of people in this province served by HSOs and CHCs. In my opening remarks, I talked as well about the CHO, the comprehensive health organization, which is presently under development.

These are alternatives to the fee-for-service system. These are alternative payment mechanisms, but they also provide an opportunity that the fee-for-service system does not, and that is an opportunity to do health promotion, disease prevention and the wellness orientation of keeping people well, which is something the health service organization and community health centre offer us as a real opportunity. I have said that health promotion, disease prevention and the expansion of community-based facilities are a priority of mine, so I was very pleased with the member for Beaches-Woodbine's question.

I think it is important for the people of this province to know what a health service organization is. I will tell the member—her question specifically was how many health service organizations there are—that there are currently 36 HSOs, serving approximately 237,833 enrolled roster patients.

It is important to understand how an HSO operates and what its objectives are. The objectives of the health service organization are to create an environment that is supportive of physicians and other health care personnel and that allows flexibility in responding to the health care needs of the population served; to develop a co-ordinated system of health care delivery that makes the most appropriate use of health care resources and that is accessible, efficient and economical; to provide special attention to health maintenance and illness prevention measures that will enhance the health status of the population served; to decrease institutional health care by giving emphasis to ambulatory care, self care and home care.

This all fits within our discussions about individuals taking responsibility. In order for them to do that, they must have the information about health promotion and disease prevention opportunities that the health service organization provides.

There are three models for the health service provider and they are funded differently from fee for service. In fact, this is an alternative payment mechanism. As I said in my opening remarks in the Legislature, I do not like the term that



describes it, but the term is "capitation." It is a universally accepted definition and it is in our lexicon.

What it really means is that it is like a retainer. On behalf of the patient who becomes a roster patient of the health service organization, the government provides an annual amount of money to keep that patient well, whereas the fee-for-service method of payment allows us to pay only for the treatment of illness.

There is a lot of interest in the health service organization by providers of care who want to be able to focus on health promotion and disease prevention, because it gives us an opportunity to pay them through this retainer method, this capitation method, for the services, which are wellness, health promotion and disease prevention.

I mentioned there are three models. The first is the provider model. This is where the health service organization is owned and operated by physicians in a group practice.

The second model is the community board model. This is a nonprofit corporation or an association controlled by a board of trustees elected by the health service organization roster members and the community. Then anyone who wishes to join is welcome to—the membership is open to anyone; I think that is important to note. It is absolutely accessible and universal. That was part of the objectives.

**1610**

The third model is the university model. This is where it is sponsored by a health science centre or a hospital and located in the community or within a hospital environment. Sponsors contract with the Ministry of Health to provide specified services and personnel on terms and conditions which are mutually agreeable, and the basic thrust of the health service organization is to achieve more effective and efficient use of health resources.

We know there are many studies coming out now which talk about duplication of services, which talk about actually unnecessary services that are provided, whether they are tests, prescriptions, X-rays or procedures themselves, which cause us great concern. We know that every incentive in the fee-for-service system is for volume. Those incentives are working well, and what we are finding is volume. In fact, the incentive here is for appropriate use of resources, for avoiding duplication, for making sure that everything that is done is necessary and will result in effective, quality care.

There has been a great deal of interest by providers in the health service organization model. Physicians are very, very interested, and I believe we will achieve our goal of doubling the number of people served by health service organizations and community health centres and that we will also see some innovative and creative proposals in the concept of the comprehensive health organization, which takes the very best of these models and combines them in how we deliver the very best quality, effective care to the people of this province. It allows us to do it in a community-based setting with a board or with the option of the university model or the provider model.

I will undertake to respond to the member as to the total number and the specific type. I could take the time now, but with only 29 minutes remaining, I would be pleased to give her a list of the 36 health service organizations that we have.

She mentioned as well community health centres. They are different, because while the providers, the physicians in the health service organization, are paid based on their roster of patients who choose that way of receiving service, which includes health promotion and disease prevention opportunities, in the community health centre, all the staff are on salary.

When we talk about alternative payments, we must recognize that we are not always talking about salary; we are talking about capitation opportunities, sessional fees and alternative ways to fee-for-service for paying for the services provided to the people.

Community health centres provide primary care services to specific target populations that require improved access to care, or have a higher disease burden perhaps, or require some additional resources. The objectives are very similar to those of the health service organization, but I think this is a very good model for allowing us to achieve what I refer to as equity in access, where you may need to add some special attention or special resources.

I am pleased to tell the member that in fact there are currently 18 approved community health centres, plus I just approved four that I think deserve special note and attention. There are 14 in full operation.

Of the ones that were recently approved, one will respond to the needs of access to services by the very significant French-speaking population of Metropolitan Toronto. We approved a community health centre here in Metropolitan Toronto targeted to the needs of that community, to give it access to services in the French language.



There are some 70,000 French-speaking people in Metropolitan Toronto. That community health centre is an excellent example of how we can reach out to a community with special needs.

Another example was the approval of the Anishnabwe Health Toronto centre to meet the needs of some estimated several thousands of native people living in the Metropolitan Toronto area. Some 30,000 or 40,000 is the estimate. That community health centre will meet the needs of the members of that very specific population to give them access in a culturally sensitive environment to their health care requirements.

As well, we approved a community health centre in London, London Inter-Community Health Centre, and in Metropolitan Toronto, the Davenport-Perth Community Health Centre and the Access Alliance. Actually, there are five. I realize that it was not four. I stand corrected there. There are five that have just been recently approved, which speak to the ability to target the special needs of a group in need of access to health services.

Again, I think it is important that the objectives be very similar to the health service organizations. We should take a moment to make people aware of how this works. The objectives are to create an environment which is supportive of physicians and other health care personnel and which allows for flexibility in responding to the health care needs of the population served. We develop a co-ordinated system of health care delivery, which makes the most appropriate use of health care resources and which is accessible, efficient and economical and provides special attention to health maintenance and illness prevention measures which will enhance the health status of the population served.

All the community health centres—and this is where it differs from the health service organizations—are sponsored by community-based organizations registered as nonprofit corporations. The boards of directors are composed of persons with expertise in the delivery of primary care services, persons with expertise to manage the centres' business affairs and representatives of the target populations.

Some community health centres—and this is a unique feature of the community health centres—offer social, housing or legal services, services other than just health, as well as health care. In fact, they receive funding from appropriate ministries and from local government for these services which are other than those which are funded by the Ministry of Health.

So we see the opportunity. We know that the whole concept of health goes beyond simply the treatment of illness. The Premier's Council on Health Strategy has acknowledged the fact that health is far more than the treatment of illness and goes far beyond just the mandate of the Ministry of Health. Therefore, around the Premier's Council on Health Strategy, we see many other ministries represented: the Ministry of Housing, the Ministry of the Environment, the Management Board of Cabinet, the Ministry of Community and Social Services, the Office for Senior Citizens' Affairs and the Office for Disabled Persons.

This acknowledges, in that forum, and I would acknowledge here in this House, that the social services provided by the Ministry of Community and Social Services, the housing services from the Ministry of Housing and the services provided by the Ministry of the Attorney General play a very important role.

The community health centre offers services that go beyond simply the treatment of illness and health care, that go beyond even health promotion and disease prevention. Those services are funded by other ministries. So the community health centre model really gives us the opportunity in another alternative way to reach out to populations with special needs.

The way that community health centres are funded is also different from the funding for health service organizations. Community health centre payments are based on an annually negotiated program base. Those budgets cover medical services and overhead expenses. This is in contrast to the health service organizations, which are funded on a capitation basis, which is the retainer method based on how many people you actually serve.

I have, and would be willing to give the member, a list of all the community health centres we have. As I said, there are some 18 which have been approved. I want to tell her there are a number which are under consideration. I believe that between community health centres and health service organizations we will achieve the goals. We will start to see a kind of positive shift to community-based services and to expansion of community-based facilities, not only through health service organizations and community health centres, but also through the Independent Health Facilities Act.

It is very important that we understand that the principles of the Independent Health Facilities Act will allow health service organizations and community health centres to enhance and expand



their role as technologies change. As I mentioned today in question period, we know that the institutional sector was designed to deal with acute care, with those things that require inpatient services, certainly cardiac care, the many very specialized types of intensive care.

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There are very many things that we know require that kind of inpatient service, but we also know that there is a significant change in the past 10 years, which technology is now allowing us to address. Whereas the acute institution used to account for the overwhelming majority of the kinds of medical attention we received—in fact, we know that in the past it was a case of you were either cured or you were not—the advances of medical science, both in drug therapies and in changing technologies, are resulting in more chronic illness. In addition, because the population is ageing, the needs of the population are changing. We now know that nine out of 10 patient contacts with the medical care system are not for acute care; they are for chronic care and disability.

The Evans, Spasoff and Podborsky reports tell us that we must shift our emphasis from only that institutional focus, that much that is presently done in institutions could be provided not only safely but more cost effectively and more appropriately closer to home for the patient, through home care and community-based services. When we talk about the kinds of positive shifts that the Independent Health Facilities Act will allow us—it will allow for the expansion of health service organizations and community health centres—this really acknowledges how medical care has changed and the fact that our population is ageing.

As I said in question period not long ago, beds are no longer the benchmark for services. Now we can provide services, because of technology, because of drug therapies, in many other ways. What we want to be able to do is to use our hospitals and institutions for what they do best, which is acute intervention, and take the pressure off them by moving positively to the community-based kinds of services, community health centres, health service organizations, the many kinds of community-based agencies offering mental health services.

Everyone is telling us. As I said, the Evans report, the Podborsky report and the Spasoff report say there is an opportunity now to shift our emphasis positively and to have the kind of balance that will respond in the future to what the needs of our population are going to be.

I want to thank the member for Beaches-Woodbine for the opportunity to talk about what I think will be a significant initiative by the ministry. As I have stated clearly in this House on numerous occasions, the reason I tabled the Independent Health Facilities Act is that we want a legislative framework to be able to move aggressively. I thank her.

**Ms. Bryden:** I appreciate the minister giving us a picture of the situation with regard to these organizations. I think it was useful to define what they are for people who are listening or reading Hansard.

But I would like the minister to tell me how much of the \$42-million increase in the estimates for community health services is actually going to be targeted to community health centres, health services organizations and the new comprehensive health service agencies that she mentioned. Incidentally, I would like this new category also to be included in the statistics that I am asking for as to how many there are, what sort of services they are providing and when they got started.

I think the minister is fantasizing a bit about how great a contribution these present organizations are making, because, as I mentioned, in 1983 there were 17 HSOs and today, five years later, there are 36. That is very slow progress. There were 10 CHCs in 1983 and now there are 18. When you are dealing with such small figures, you are not making very much of an impression on the community.

In addition to this question about the \$42 million and how much of it is going to these organizations, I would like to ask the minister: Will some of the kinds of service organizations that will be authorized under Bill 147, the independent health facilities, be foreign-based, foreign-owned organizations that will come in and apply for status as an HSO or a CHC and will there be criteria as to whether these organizations should be developed by Canadian groups and organizations in preference to foreign-based ones, so that we can have a real development of this kind of preventive health care work and the kind of non-fee-for-service delivery of health services?

Could the minister respond to those two questions about the \$42 million and whether Bill 147 will authorize organizations that may participate in the development of these organizations?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** I would be pleased to respond to the member in this way. I believe that Bill 147, which is the Independent Health Facilities Act, is a very important piece of



legislation because, as I have said, it will give us the legislative framework to plan properly for community-based health services. Not only will that allow us to have the legislative framework, but also it will give us the funding framework and flexibility to respond to the very different needs of the different communities of the province. It will allow us to respond not only to new technologies which are available today, but also to technologies which may be available in the future.

In fact, I believe that as we head through second reading of the bill, which I hope we will have an opportunity to do very soon, and then through the legislative process of committee hearings, we will be able to see what an important piece of legislation this is.

I say to the member that what is significant about that piece of legislation is that it is the establishment of community-based facilities in an orderly and planned way, with the same quality assurance and patient confidentiality that we presently have in our hospitals, in a community setting, so that we can respond to changing technologies, providing services as close to home as possible.

The act itself at the present time responds to a number of ways that we will be able to negotiate appropriate funding. As the member can see, community health centres and health service organizations are two alternative payment models. I believe the Independent Health Facilities Act will offer us another alternative payment method, and we have said that it is a priority of this government to encourage and respond to proposals for alternative payments.

As I have said, there has been an awful lot of physician interest in the health service organization in particular, and we have made a commitment to make these kinds of alternative funding opportunities available to physicians on a voluntary basis and to make them attractive and encourage them, because it gives doctors the opportunity to do more than simply treat illness.

I believe that the Independent Health Facilities Act will give us another pillar and another way of responding to changing technologies, another way of responding to our ageing population, another way of responding cost-effectively to our economic realities—those three compelling and irresistible forces for change—and I am hoping that we will ultimately have the consent of this House to move forward and proclaim that legislation at the appropriate time, following due legislative discussion. I believe that is a full and complete answer to the member.

My House leader has brought to my attention that the critic and House leader for the third party are concerned following our interchange regarding my desire to respond to his questions. I want to assure the critic for the third party, the member for Parry Sound, that in fact, as I have stated in this House, I would be pleased to give him the undertaking that I will respond to his questions in written form at an early time.

**1630**

I am having some difficulty in understanding the dynamic because it has always been my intention, as stated, to respond in the many different ways that are available. I was a little concerned last week, when I rose to answer questions in this House during estimates and his House leader said: "No, dispense; we're not interested in those answers at this time," that that might have been misinterpreted or that he thought I was upset about that; I was not.

I believe that the estimates process is extremely important, and I know that members of this House do not expect that it is just a time when everybody stands up and lists all his questions and then they get answered. This is the time when the minister stands in the House and responds and explains. We brought television into the Legislature so that the people of this province could watch this process with interest. I am committed to it, and I believe it is a very important process and an opportunity to stand accountable in the ultimate public forum.

We have many other ways of having questions answered, which is all I was really trying to say to the critic. The public should know that there is daily question period, where the responses are short for a number of reasons: because of Mr. Speaker's hand and the time of question period is short. There are questions in Orders and Notices where we try to respond to details—

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** Do you want us to talk about order paper questions?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** I understand the frustration, and we will do what we can to answer the questions asked in writing in a timely manner, as appropriate.

**Mr. Eves:** I certainly accept the minister's undertaking to do that. That is not what I understood she said earlier. However, now that she has clarified that point and in fact has given an undertaking to answer all the questions in writing, without having to go through another avenue, that is fine.

**Ms. Bryden:** I will be expecting a reply as to how much of the \$42-million increase is actually



going to health service organizations and community health centres, but that can come later.

I would like to raise a question. I have heard some complaints from HSOs that they have been suffering from a cash-flow shortage during the long negotiations that have been going on for the pay increase that the medical profession is seeking. I understand that they normally get a monthly remittance to cover their costs of operating but that the increase they would need to cover inflation this year was not coming through for some months—I am not sure whether this situation has been corrected—because it had not been decided how much of an increase the physicians would be given and this, of course, would affect the amount of money that would ultimately be coming to the HSOs and CHCs on a capitation basis.

It really puts some of them in a very serious position because they had no means of financing inflationary costs and were expected to go in the red or wait until these prolonged negotiations were settled. I think some sort of interim adjustment, at least for cost of living, should be provided for in whatever formula is used for transmitting their monthly payments to them.

The doctor in private practice, of course, is not getting his increase until this is settled; but on the other hand he has his own ways of financing his practice and he does not suffer from the same limits as the person on the capitation payments. I hope the minister will look into that particular question.

She did not really reassure me that the new independent health facilities would not be allowed to set up HSOs and CHCs from foreign bases, such as a health organization operating in the United States, which may decide to establish a branch in Canada, become an HSO or a CHC and benefit from any startup funding and the sort of funding that is provided. It would perhaps be competing with Canadian-based facilities that are being developed to meet specific needs and would be taking up some of the money that may be available for promoting the kinds of HSOs and CHCs that we have been supporting, and that the minister has been giving lipservice to but has not really promoted adequately.

I hope that in those two fields she will reassure us that there will not be a lot of foreign-based facilities moving into those fields and there will be much more promotion of Canadian-based HSOs and CHCs.

**Mr. Chairman:** Do other members wish to comment? Minister? Any more comments or questions? Is that it?

**Ms. Bryden:** The minister has not really answered my question as to whether foreign-based facilities may become HSOs and CHCs.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** I will take note of the member's request and consider it. Concerning any specific questions that have been raised today, as I have given my commitment to the critic for the third party, I would be pleased to do the best I can to see that questions are responded to in writing at as early a time as possible.

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** That's not good enough.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** The member for Windsor-Riverside—it cannot be heard on TV—just said, “That's not good enough,” which shows that the nature of this process is that we know we have critics who will criticize if we do it or if we do not do it, if we respond or if we do not respond. In fact, that is what this forum is about, the opportunity to stand accountable.

I want to state again my thanks to the members who participated in estimates and asked very good questions on behalf of their constituents. I would also like to thank the Ministry of Health officials, who did an outstanding job in providing the support and information necessary to allow me to respond to the many questions that have been asked by the members of the Legislature. The estimates process is the time when ministers stand accountable for the significant dollars that are spent. As I said, the Ministry of Health estimates for this year are \$12.7 billion, accounting for about \$1.4 million an hour. That is a significant amount of money, more than one third of the total provincial budget.

I do want to express my thanks to the members of the ministry staff who worked on estimates. I want to tell the House that there have been a lot of changes in the past year at the Ministry of Health—I think they know that—and changing times are always difficult times. We have only to look back to 10 years ago to see how many changes have already come. When I make speeches, I say: “How many people had a videocassette recorder? How many people had a microwave? Who ever heard of ultrasound or computerized axial tomography scanners or magnetic resonance imaging or lithotripters?” I mean, we can barely say the names of these new technologies, and they are developing so rapidly. How many people had personal computers at home 10 years ago? How many people 10 years ago were computer-literate?

These are the enormous challenges facing health care, the economic realities, the changing demographics and particularly changing technologies. Over the course of this next year, we



will have the opportunity in many different ways in this Legislature to discuss the many issues facing us in health care. The challenges are enormous.

I appreciate the opportunity to stand in the House and discuss the issues raised by members of the Legislature. I would like to thank the government House leader and all the members of the Legislature for participating in the ultimate in democracy, which is the chance to stand accountable before the people of the province for the enormous resources which they give to us through their tax dollars and to stand accountable in this Legislature for how we spend those. I would also like to thank my ministry staff for their support.

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**Mr. Chairman:** The time allocated for consideration of the estimates of the Ministry of Health has now expired.

Votes 1801 to 1806, inclusive, agreed to.

On motion by Hon. Mr. Conway, the committee of supply reported certain resolutions.

#### RETAIL SALES TAX AMENDMENT ACT (continued)

Resuming the adjourned debate on the motion for second reading of Bill 122, An Act to amend the Retail Sales Tax Act.

**Mr. Allen:** It is always a delight to take over the floor from my colleague the member for Hamilton East (Mr. Mackenzie). We of course do a great many things together and this, I suppose, is another form of our collaboration, in which we pursue the interests not only of our respective constituencies in the city of Hamilton and the province at large but also the various groups in it for which we attempt to speak.

Bill 122, which we are addressing in the course of this debate, is of course part of a larger budget proposed in the spring by the Treasurer (Mr. R. F. Nixon). It was a budget which I think was notable for the way in which it continued certain trends of the past. Namely, it continued to tax low-income persons who ought not to be taxed. It continued to allow additional loopholes for those earning above \$50,000 a year: persons who, through various advantages they had with respect to dividend tax credits, etc., were able to take advantage of tax loopholes and in many instances, pay no tax at all.

There were people like Peter Allen, for example, who is the head of Lac Minerals Ltd. in Ontario, one of the big gold mining companies of the province. Of all the executives in Canada last

year, he was one of the highest paid at about \$3.8 million a year. This man was able to save hundreds of thousands of dollars under the tax schemes of both the provincial and federal governments.

The notable thing about the tax bill we are talking about today is that it continues that element of regressivity that still haunts our tax systems in Canada. In fact, it is part, it would appear, of a worldwide trend to taxation on consumption rather than on income.

In this country, when we first initiated income taxes on any scale in the course of the First World War, the federal government at that time appropriated that income tax field from the provinces, and that has remained the arrangement in this country ever since. But at that point in time, it was clearly established as a principle that income taxes would be levied on a progressive basis, that those who had more would pay a higher percentage of their incomes in order that those who had less would pay a smaller percentage and would be hit least of all by the taxes that were levied, in that instance to pay for the war and the war effort of the First World War. That principle remained in place throughout the history of taxation in Canada up until this point in time.

We all know what is happening at the federal level. We know that there is a so-called tax reform in place, in which Mr. Wilson offered to the people of Canada a pre-election bonus, if you like, by reducing income taxes somewhat, having, of course, added over \$1,000 a year to the average lower-middle-income family's tax bill in the previous four years. He did drop those rates a little bit and gave some benefit to some taxpayers, but we all knew that the second shoe was about to drop after the election and that, of course, became part of the general election debate.

The big question in debate, it turned out, was whether the new consumption taxes, the new value added taxes that the Minister of Finance was going to add, would add \$10 billion or \$14 billion or some figure in between—I think the Treasurer actually estimated \$18 billion at one point—to the tax bill that Canadians would pay as a result of the new value added, consumption-based taxes that the federal finance minister was about to levy. Of course, that has yet to come into place, but already, as is so often the case in fiscal and financial matters and in social policies, it seems Ontario is ready to lead the way.

The Treasurer of this province, in the budget offered last spring, engaged to move on to a new



major tax initiative which would have added a single percentage point, but as we know, that was a one-seventh increase in the total tax bill yielded by sales taxes for the people of Ontario.

It is ironic that at the very time when the Treasurer was proposing to implement, and indeed in the wake of his budget announcement did implement, a sales tax increase on virtually everything that moved in Ontario, with the exception of food, if you put it broadly speaking, his government was expecting a report from the Social Assistance Review Committee, which had been established some 16 months before to look at the whole issue of social assistance in this province and to try to provide new ways by which the province might support those who are in genuine need and those among the working poor who need some assistance in moving their quality of life up somewhat, approximating at least the poverty line, as we have it described by such groups as the Social Planning Council of Metropolitan Toronto and others.

I say it is ironic because at the very moment that there is a major scheme afoot which would provide a blueprint for the province to attack the gross inequities that exist in the income levels of Ontarians, the very same government that sponsored that study and was inviting those proposals was engaging in a major tax shift on to the basis of consumption, with all of its regressive features upon the poor, low-income families of Ontario.

Taxation in general has never dealt kindly, even on a progressive income tax basis, with those who are in the lower-income status. We have had various studies in Canada and in Ontario which have demonstrated for us that in fact, even under the normally progressive income tax system that we did have, the poor fared very badly indeed.

For example, there was the Courchene study; there was a study done by the Quebec government in 1984; there was a white paper released by the Minister of Finance in that province; there was the study done by Donald Macdonald, by the Macdonald Royal Commission on Economic Union and Development Prospects for Canada, which we have heard so much about in the free trade debate.

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Each of these studies made it very plain that taxation, as it stood, impacted heavily upon low-income families. If you take, for example, the Quebec study, you discover that the head of a two-parent, two-child family who left social assistance for a minimum-wage job would have

an implicit marginal tax rate of 80 per cent, and in some instances recipients could encounter implicit marginal tax rates of 100 per cent or even higher. In other words, as this study says, for every dollar they earn from employment, these people would lose the equivalent of a dollar or even more, compared with the amount of social assistance they would have received.

If you take an equivalent study done in Ontario, for example of low-income, single-parent families in Toronto with incomes of \$16,000 or less, of approximately the same date, they faced marginal income tax rates that varied between 75 per cent and 100 per cent. The tax rates were considerably lower for single parents with higher incomes, obviously. But income tax, as it stood, obviously impacted very heavily upon low-income families.

When you look at the Macdonald commission, it concludes: "The analysis demonstrates clearly that marginal income tax rates are invariably higher for low-income earners than for those in higher-income brackets. These confiscatory rates create a veritable poverty wall that encourages low-income households to remain dependent on social assistance programs. For many, it is simply not worth it to work. Inactivity or reduced participation in the official market appears as an economically rational choice. The choice can turn out to be morally costly. The individual loses the feeling that he can fend for himself or that he controls his future. This is the poverty trap."

That is the trap the normal income tax system built for low-income earners, for low-income families, for those most in need.

But now what we appear to be turning to in this country, and not least of all in this province, is taxes based on consumption. We all know that they are inherently regressive, that they inherently attack the individual and the family at the low-income end of the spectrum, because all those persons have to spend all their income on the necessities of life.

In fact, it is rather ironic that at the moment this tax is going into place there are more and more families in Ontario for whom even the exemption of food will not mean anything because so many of them line up for the food banks in order to get their food from food banks. They will not be paying for food because they are paying almost all their social assistance rates on rent.

Of course, the rental market is being exacerbated and made worse and less accessible for these very families. Rents are being driven up by



the very housing crisis we are in at the moment, and the housing crisis, in turn, is going to be made worse by the establishment of the federal sales tax system, which house builders and construction companies in this province have told us will add another nine percentage points to the cost of a house, driving up the cost of the average house by somewhere in the order of another \$20,000 or \$30,000.

The components that go into house building, into apartment building, even into building affordable housing, will make the cost of those units that much more and therefore the rental charges will go up, so that every time a poor person, a low-income family, even a middle-income family, turns around, it will find itself assaulted by the new consumption taxes at the federal level and at the provincial level, which will add up to new taxation rates of anywhere from 16 per cent to 18 per cent on the bills the individual and the family pay.

I referred to the Thomson report and to its comments on the way in which low-income people need to have a whole series of new supporting programs that would enable them to get off social assistance where that was possible, where they were not afflicted by a disability that made it impossible for them to work or where they were not bound up in a family situation that required them to have that assistance for the time being.

But for those who are employable and those who want to be employed and could be employed, it is important programs be put in place to enable them to move off social assistance, find an employment opportunity that would give them a new handle on life and move them upward in the income scale to become mobile once more.

Again, ironically, one of the items the Thomson commission spent a good deal of time talking about was the impact of taxation upon low-income families and the way in which it impacted even on those on social assistance, maintaining them in the poverty trap of the social assistance programs and making it difficult for them to get off.

They said some things very directly about the April 8, 1988, budget that this bill derives from. Among the things they were concerned about was the fact that the Minister of Revenue (Mr. Grandmaître), while he was constructing his taxation schemes, was not paying sufficient attention to the nature of the transfers he was engaged in making to various agencies and municipalities around the province, which in turn

had to deal with those on social assistance and so on, and pointed out quite clearly that those families often found themselves caught in the cross-fire between the programs on the one hand and the taxation on the other hand.

They wrote as follows. They said they acknowledged that the budget did contain a few measures of direct benefit to social assistance recipients, for example. They went on to say, however: "Social assistance recipients were also affected by some of the tax measures announced in the budget...most notably the increase in the sales tax from seven per cent to eight per cent. And although there were nominal increases in Ontario tax credits, changes in the financial tests used to determine eligibility actually reduced the value of the tax credits for some recipients. When the increase in benefits and tax changes were considered together, we estimated that 60,000 social assistance recipients would be worse off financially as a result of the budget than they would otherwise have been. The losses, as high as \$108 per year, were expected to affect primarily single parents and families with disabilities."

In other words, some of the most vulnerable people in Ontario, 60,000 of them, are going to be adversely impacted by this tax measure we are debating, which will be imposed as a result of this bill if it is passed.

That, surely, is morally unacceptable, not only not just economically unacceptable, to the people affected who at this point in time are struggling to keep their lives together, such as single mothers who are trying to keep shelter over their kids, trying to see that they get off to school reasonably well-dressed, trying to see that they have food on the table, trying to see that they have shoes and winter coats to wear through the coming winter. With all kinds of pressures on them and unable to get through a month on the income they get, yet they are the ones who are being impacted the most heavily by the new tax measures this government is proposing to establish.

We have proposed in this party that if the government were interested in relieving low-income families of some of their burden, there might be some acceptable sales taxes we might be interested in seeing introduced.

For example, when it comes to the taxation of some of the business services that are not at this point in time sufficiently taxed and that are, of course, provided by or for business corporations, which have been increasingly getting away—I will not say entirely scot-free in every case but in some cases scot-free—with respect to the tax bills



they pay, there are some areas of forgone revenue this government could use in order not only to get low-income taxpayers off the tax system and give them some relief, but also so they would have a little bit of money left over for some other things.

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For example, at this point in time the government forgoes taxes on management consulting in the amount of some \$14 million. On engineering services, it foregoes revenue of \$66 million that it could be taxing. There are architectural services of the order of \$16 million, computer services of the order of \$39 million, advertising taxation of \$125 million that could be levied without any problem, and stock brokerage commissions to the extent of \$35 million.

None of that would either dry up those services or drive anybody out of business, but at the same time it would generate twice the amount of revenue that is necessary in order to exempt low-income families from taxation and to get those who are living below the poverty line in Ontario off the tax rolls. That would be a worthwhile use of some kinds of sales taxes, but when one looks at the kind of tax that is being proposed across the board, then the opposite effect happens for those families.

I suggest that a government that had some moral sensitivity about it and was trying to begin even now to do some of the things it can do, without any major fiscal loss, for the poor in Ontario, for low-income families, could do so now without any great difficulty along the lines I have just suggested.

In the course of doing that, the government would be meeting at least one of the 274 proposals that the Thomson commission has proposed for the government. Yet we have seen the Minister of Community and Social Services (Mr. Sweeney), time and time again in this House, rise to say that he cannot respond to our demands for action on the Thomson committee's report.

He has said repeatedly that this is a package and that it has to be acted on as a package, yet I was struck the other day that he told us he had in fact moved on the utilities cost proposal even before the committee published its report, so he himself is not viewing the package approach as a sacrosanct item.

I would have thought he would have found it possible to move on a number of these items that would not adversely impact on the packaging Thomson has proposed. That would have been something he could have done quite readily. I would have hoped a Treasurer with some moral

sensitivity about him with regard to the plight of the poor in Ontario would have been willing to second that and to give him the backing he needed in order to do that.

Of course, the Thomson committee does not leave the other tax that is going to be levied on the poor in Ontario unremarked on in the course of its discussion of taxation. It does go on to make some very notable remarks with respect to the way in which the new consumption taxes proposed by the federal government will change the tax game entirely in Ontario.

We have noticed that when the Treasurer has been asked by the press how his sales tax scheme interacts and interfaces with what Mr. Wilson is proposing in Ottawa, he has been fairly coy about it. He has, of course, been very political in the sense that he has said, "Well, you know, we are not entirely happy with everything Mr. Wilson is proposing, but we do think that if Mr. Wilson goes ahead with this, it is going to be pretty difficult for us not to be part and parcel of all that."

The provincial sales tax will have to be rolled into the federal sales tax. It will all become one vast national scheme and the result will be that we will be part and parcel of the new federal tax grab. That will implicate us in the overall sorry regressivity that will bring to the Canadian tax system as a whole.

When one talks about that regressivity, it is rather interesting to note the analysis that has been done on the way in which the combination of the tax bite of the two will impact upon various income levels in the country. This analysis was provided by the Toronto Star in its extrapolations of figures it got from the two ministries concerned in the two governments concerned.

It is useful to look at the percentages because they are shocking. They have to be shocking to any of us who have some concern about the kinds of things the Thomson report is trying to address—the families, the individuals who are disabled, who are on social assistance, those who are struggling in low-income, minimum wage jobs, trying to preserve some dignity for themselves and their families by hacking it, if you like, even at considerable cost, in the job market.

If you take, for example, family income of less than \$10,000, the sales tax increase that is entailed would be 97 per cent, a 97 per cent increase in total taxes. In the case of a \$10,000 to \$20,000 income, it is a 74 per cent increase, clearly payments that low-income families simply cannot afford. You move to the \$20,000 to \$30,000 income bracket and your increase in



taxation is 47 per cent. In the \$30,000 to \$40,000 bracket, it goes to a 36 per cent increase. For \$40,000 to \$50,000, the tax goes up 31 per cent, and for \$50,000 to \$60,000, it is up 29 per cent.

It keeps on dropping until you get to \$100,000 and over, and your increase in total taxes is only 18 per cent as compared with 97 per cent for those who are in the under \$10,000 scale of income, whom we still, to our shame, tax.

When one listens to general rhetoric, which politicians of both the old parties still indulge in, about this being a compassionate society and how caring their political representatives are and so on and so on, one has to listen to that language with a great deal of scepticism in the wake of this move towards increasingly regressive taxes based upon consumption. This is not the vision of Ontario or of Canada that this party accepts or promotes.

In our view, it is possible to design a taxation system that deals fairly with the ordinary Canadian and the ordinary Ontarian, that deals fairly and justly with those who through no fault of their own find themselves locked into low-income jobs, find themselves as families hard-pressed in order to make ends meet, find themselves, unfortunately, on social assistance rates, or find themselves as elderly poor.

For example, 70 per cent of the elderly women in our province and in our country are locked in poverty. That is a shameful story. Any one of us who stood up to speak about it would have a lot of very heart-rending stories to tell. These are the people this new approach to taxation will more and more undermine and more and more demoralize.

They are not the only ones who will be demoralized in the process. All of us are demoralized implicitly in any condoning of any addition to our taxation system that will be regressive in the fashion in which this Treasurer's new sales tax is proposed. It is magnified in turn, of course, by what will happen federally in the coming year.

In contributing to this debate, I want to underline once again on behalf of our party how desperately unhappy we are with last spring's budget, and in particular how massively disappointed we are with the Treasurer of this province that he would even suggest to this House that we might move towards a tax system which was more regressive than that which we have already in place in Ontario and which, as I said at the beginning of my remarks, is already a difficult tax system for the poor to cope with.

1710

I will leave my remarks at that. I hope this House will heartily reject Bill 122. I am sure that my colleagues in this House, and in this party in particular, will be making some further remarks in hopes that we will be able to persuade the Treasurer and the governing party to abandon this bill.

**Mrs. Cunningham:** It gives me pleasure this afternoon to be speaking to Bill 122 and to be speaking strongly against it. I am sure that the citizens in this province were quite shocked—as all of us in the opposition parties remember when the Treasurer did in fact table his budget in this House last spring—to see for the first time in six years, at a time when our economy was booming, that this Liberal government was prepared to participate in establishing an increase in the sales tax that affected each and every citizen in this province.

As my colleague has just stated, it affects people from the low-income families and middle-income families more than anyone at all, and I would like to speak to that now.

This tax has been spoken about as being extremely regressive. It is applied regardless of people's ability to pay, and thus it has a much larger impact, as I have stated, on the poor and on low-income persons than it does on the well-to-do.

In 1982, in response to a Progressive Conservative budget measure which expanded the retail sales tax base but which did not increase the tax rate, the Premier described the measure as "regressive and inflationary" and said that it signalled "a change in the philosophy of taxation. We saw a move away from the progressive system which we as Liberals believe in passionately, taxation that is based on ability to pay, and we saw a major move towards flat consumption and regressive taxes."

My, how people can change when they are in government. The Liberals' own record shows that they left their passionate belief in progressive taxation behind them on the opposition benches.

The families most likely to be hardest hit by this budget, and particularly by the sales tax increase, are likely to be those who make just more than \$25,000 a year, the income cutoff for tax credits, and up to \$60,000 a year, the income level above which the impact of sales taxes decreases. Thus, the low-income and the middle class are going to bear the brunt of this tax increase more than anyone.



I can speak in the House this afternoon about what that really means when it comes to being the critic for the Ministry of Community and Social Services.

As members know, we had a number of promises that were made in this last election on behalf of the Liberals who ran for this House, and many of them were stuck with unrealistic promises that they made. If the persons who were running in that election had been well advised, they never could have gone out across this province and made some of the promises they made.

We are talking now about such things as building new schools, providing jobs in the environment, increasing the social service benefits—

**Mr. Faubert:** And they have.

**Mrs. Cunningham:** I beg your pardon?—far beyond the rate of inflation, as they have not. I wish the member opposite would be recorded in the Hansard of this legislative session right now so that we can take him to task and quote him in our daily householder that we plan to mail out soon.

The point I am trying to make is that there are many promises that were made that in fact could never be kept, even with this kind of regressive tax that was placed on the citizens of Ontario at a time when the economy is booming.

The sales tax increase is inflationary. It will probably increase the province's inflation rate by one half of a per cent. We already know, according to the analysis of Treasurer, that Ontario's consumer price index increase from 4.3 per cent to 4.7 per cent is a consequence of the budget measures. The Liberals have done nothing to help control inflation or to reduce inflationary expectations.

On the expenditures side, they have increased their spending at a rate double the average rate of inflation. That means that if you got a four per cent increase in your paycheque, you are going to pay taxes of eight per cent because this Liberal government really has to find a way of getting more money.

On the issue of hospitals and schools, let's just have a little look at what the Liberals are going to do when it comes to building hospitals and schools. I am reading from the statements of the government here, last year's budget: In 1987-88, capital spending is \$2.72 billion. On page 50 of this year's budget and capital spending book, the projection is for \$2,803,000,000. The difference, in simple mathematics, is \$83 million. So the increase in capital infrastructure, hospitals,

schools, roads, the whole thing lumped together, is up \$83 million, about three per cent. The budget is up eight per cent; capital is up three per cent.

The spending side is up \$3 billion—I should be correcting myself here—about 9.5 per cent, not eight per cent but 9.5 per cent. So do not tell us the government is going to be building hospitals, schools and improving transportation. It is not keeping close to inflation on the capital side. That was not the reason for the tax grab. We will be able to prove that. We are doing it now in the estimates. It is really wonderful for us to have this kind of fun in the Legislature and to see the kids still sitting in more portables than ever before in the history of this province.

The government is up \$83 million; that is how much in capital. Do members want to know what they are spending it on? One item: Government Services. Last year the budget in Government Services capital was \$107 million. This year it is \$190 million. It is up \$83 million in Government Services. Everything else is flattened.

What does Government Services spend its money on? Why does it need more capital? For more buildings to house civil servants. They have increased the number of civil servants, the bureaucracy, in this government in the last two years by over 8,000 people. Let them try to defend that one in the next election. That is what the government spends its money on. They are not spending it on roads, they are not spending it on hospitals and they are not spending it on schools. They spend more money on facilities to house civil servants, and everything else is flat-lined.

When the citizens of Ontario took a look at that budget, they said to themselves, "We sure don't know where the good news is." The average working man and woman in this province must be wondering when they are going to be allowed to reap some of the benefits of the present economic boom. It has never been more wonderful to live in Ontario because people are working hard. They are trying to save their money. Our young families are trying to buy homes, just as we tried to do when we were their age. We are making it more difficult on a daily basis, especially this Liberal government.

These young people were planning this year not only on buying their homes, but on being able to take care of their families in many ways that many of us forget. Because we get so wrapped up in the day-to-day big money, big spending of government, we forget what it is like to really have to plan and save. They were planning this



year on buying new homes, on buying clothes for their children, and on putting a little bit away for the future and for their children's education. But they were not able to do that, and that is because this government decides it knows better about planning money. It knows that it cannot possibly leave an extra nickel in the pockets of average Ontarians to help pay the rent or to save for their children's education.

1720

Government thinks it would be bad policy to let people keep a few extra dollars to buy some new children's clothing or to buy more groceries, and it knows better than to allow them to start saving again. That is because they honestly believe that big government, more government and more spending are going to lead us to the promised land when, in fact, they are more likely to take us to the ditch, and I mean it. The Liberal members know as well as I do what the numbers are. People will be watching for a response to those election promises. By the way, they were the Liberals' promises and not ours.

Let's take a little look at what some of those promises were.

More schools: We have already talked about that. By the way, in London, the London Board of Education was provided with a bill of some \$170,000 more after it set its budget, just to meet the requirements of the new retail sales tax. The minister knows that was some 14.3 per cent higher, as we move from seven per cent to eight per cent.

For some of the people in this Legislative Assembly I would think that the salaries of the people who are teaching children every day and facing the classroom are much more important than what the government is spending its money on and it knows where it is doing it: Government Services, big buildings for more bureaucrats, and what is it doing? It is not providing the services.

I just left a meeting in my office with a single parent who took time out of her busy day, before she went to meet her child from school, to come and tell me what this tax grab meant to her. These are the people we should be listening to. An eight per cent sales tax to her meant that she had to think very carefully about whether she would be able to buy winter boots this year. It meant that she could not help her child, in fact, buy his new hockey equipment. Those are the kinds of things that are being taxed, and she also told me that it is fruitless for her to try to save for a home because of the way inflation and the sales tax are going.

I would like to talk just a little bit about the sales tax increase being completely unnecessary.

Even if the Liberals had not increased one single, solitary tax in the 1988-89 budget, government revenues would have increased by 8.2 per cent or by \$2.8 billion over last year's inflows. Talk about greedy.

We are not unaware of what this government's hopes are. I think this editorial, as written by Lorrie Goldstein of the Sun, would be an important one to remind the government of. "Parsimonious old farmer, my foot." Guess who he is talking about? He is not talking about the members who are farmers. "Treasurer Bob Nixon yesterday plowed taxpayers into the ground and then stuck it to them with a gilt-edged pitchfork." This is good stuff. "But this budget also employs the oldest political trick in the book," and we are smart to this one. "It sticks it to the taxpayer in the first year of a majority government in the belief that the public has a short memory.

"A year ago, when the Liberals had only 51 seats and a minority government, Nixon said in his pre-election budget that 'fiscal responsibility' meant no new taxes.

"Yesterday, with the economy still strong and the social needs precisely the same, Nixon argued 'fiscal responsibility' demanded the biggest tax grab in Ontario history." My goodness, I think the public is listening to that one.

I should give the House a little story about what it looked like in London last March when we had a little by-election. We knocked on the doors and wondered what the issues really would be. I will tell the House what they were. The Liberals gave the issues to us right in the middle of the by-election; that is how strategically stupid they are. One election issue was Sunday shopping. We will see how they deal with that one. They are going to have to find a nice little way.

Quality of life and Sunday working, that is what it is all about. This is not a party, obviously, that believes very strongly in the quality of life for families. A common pause day is something every family in this province deserves. What are we looking at? Sunday working, people having to work on Sunday, because those people opposite quietly make these decisions behind closed doors and do not tell the public what they are going to do. That is fine, but they have told them now.

The second issue was education; no school. We will see. Last year they did not give us a new school in London and we will see if they give us one this year. Okay?

The third issue was taxes, the sales tax. We had a ball going from door to door in London last



March and we just sailed down here on a tremendous majority vote. Not because the Liberals did not have a terrific candidate—they sure did—but because they did not do one thing to help that candidate; not one thing. They threw the issues out there on a silver plate. If we had known what the budget would have looked like, we would have called it a gold plate, and the Liberals are the only people who own them. Big bucks, big spending, the biggest tax grab in the history of this province.

All right. In other words, economic growth alone would have given the government nearly \$3 billion more to spend this year than it had last year. But that was not enough for this big-majority Liberal government. Tax, tax, tax, spend, spend, spend—that is their approach to fiscal management. As a wife and mother, I should tell them that if I overspent my budget three years in a row, there would be nobody coming to my rescue.

Do the Liberals know who came to their rescue this year? The public, the low-income people and the middle-class families who are out there working on a day-to-day basis. They came to the Liberals' rescue. The Liberals did not need to be rescued, number one. The Liberals did not need their money. The increase is inflationary, regressive and unnecessary.

This year, Ontario government tax revenues will be 72 per cent greater than they were in 1984-85 and retail sales tax collections will be up more than 75 per cent over that same period. In three years, tax revenues are 72 per cent greater. Do members opposite know what people took home in their paycheques? They sure as heck did not take 72 per cent more home in three years. Retail sales tax collections will be up more than 75 per cent.

This is a wonderful message the government is giving to the young people who are out there working for their \$20,000, if they have a university degree. What kind of a message is the government giving to young people? What a rotten example of planning, honestly, and the government hopes they will forget, just as Lorrie Goldstein said. All right. Members opposite did not like that one. Let's get on with another one and then we will close.

Rosemary Speirs in the *Toronto Star*, April 21, 1988: The budget "ignores the fact that many low-income earners will pay the extra tax on leaded gasoline because they drive older cars. It also rather self-righteously assumes the poor find it easier to give up bad habits like smoking and drinking than the rest of us.

"They don't, of course, and that means no matter how the Treasurer tries to paint it, his new taxes are going to mean more hardship for those who can least afford them...." "If anything, the poor will pay more, because a Treasurer who calls himself a progressive liberal chose to raise most of his new revenue through the regressive sales tax."

I think that very clearly paints the picture. We could go on and speak about how much is enough and what is necessary and how the public really feels. I think this Liberal government underestimates what this public will remember about this government's performance so far. We will try to see government members weasel out of their Sunday shopping issue. We will remind the people about the kind of money the government needs and what it did not do; there will be as many students in portables three years from now as there are now and as there were a year ago, because the government cannot deliver.

**1730**

There will be large class sizes because it was an irresponsible promise, one that I would have loved to have made to the teachers in the 14 years that I was on the school board. But I knew it would have been the wrong thing to do; we in London could not deliver, because it was not being responsible. It is something you do over a long period of time, not two years.

I shall close my remarks today, during this debate on sales tax, and just simply say that this government has not proven that it can plan, it has not proven that it can even begin to meet the promises, and it has left more poor people poorer with less services and facilities than it had two years ago when it was elected.

**Mr. Harris:** I am pleased to rise and briefly associate myself with the remarks of the member for London North. In a period of less than a year, the member—

**Mr. Epp:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I understood that we go in rotation.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. M. C. Ray):** The member for Nipissing has the floor. He rose first and I recognized him.

**Mr. Harris:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I congratulate you, in your short period of time, on knowing the rules better than some of your colleagues who have been here for 15 or 20 years.

I am delighted, in the time left to me, to associate my remarks with those of the member for London North. I was about to say that in less than a year she has grasped some of the very



complex financial issues far better than have certainly any of the members of the government benches whom I sat listening to with their silly interjections while she was speaking.

I also want to say that we do not blame the Minister of Revenue or Ministry of Revenue officials for the dastardly budget that was brought in that led to this 14 per cent increase in the sales tax. Nonetheless, the Minister of Revenue, in his constant badgering and interjections while the member for London North was trying to speak, said: "What would you have us do? Where would we get the money?"

Maybe, if his officials figured out how to stop a whole truckload of gasoline going across the border, they could come up with another \$100 million right there. If he could solve that problem, that would be \$100 million that he would not have to collect, as well, even with his spending habits and double-the-rate-of-inflation spending patterns, which has really caused the problems.

I really want to say that I enjoyed the remarks of the member for London North. I think she hit the nail right on the head. I want to say, as well, and conclude by reiterating that she has certainly demonstrated a grasp, on behalf of her constituents, far in excess of what one would expect in her short time here.

**Mr. Daigeler:** I just wanted to say to the member for London North, and also to all of the Tories, that I find it quite hypocritical. Over the last three or four weeks I have been sitting with the member for London North on the estimates of the Ministry of Colleges and Universities and the estimates of the Office for Senior Citizens' Affairs.

Basically, every question that the member asked was asking for more money, for more services and for more programs. At the same time, now the member says: "We should not really pay for it. We should not raise taxes." On this side of the House, at least we have the guts to say, "We want to pay now for the services, rather than burden our future generations with that increased tax load."

Rather than saying this government is not providing the services, I think the member should at least acknowledge that we are providing the services; we are paying for them now. I would just like to say to the member for London North that she cannot have it both ways.

**Mrs. Cunningham:** I really take objection to the remarks that were just made with regard to my asking for more money. I would like anyone to produce the Hansard that has me asking for

more money. I have consistently in this House reminded the government of its promises and I have consistently told it where it could get the money to spend on the programs: in the Office for Senior Citizens' Affairs, in the Ministry of Education, in the Ministry of Community and Social Services. I speak with the Minister of Community and Social Services frequently about where he can find his money.

That is one argument they will not pin on me. I may in fact turn around some day and say that we need more schools, and I will tell the government where it can get the money for the schools too. They can get it from their own big bureaucracy. They can start taking a look at some of their regional offices and some of all the high-priced help, and their computers, which they do not know what to do with, and do not blame us on that one.

Four years ago those people started spending money on computers. Mr. Speaker, do not laugh. I do not blame you. Does it really take most good managers four years to figure out something is not working and, in the last two years, spend more than \$40 million on something that is a flunk?

That is the kind of management they have, but they will not catch me telling them to spend more money. I will tell them to spend what they have got more wisely, and I will still stand in this House and tell them that sales tax was not necessary. It was regressive and it takes money from the people who need it the most, people who are working to contribute to this wonderful economy.

Do not tell me that in the estimates I am asking for more money. I am telling them where to spend their money, and if they listened, they might have one little hope of winning the next election, because I can tell them, a whole bunch of them are going to kiss their seats goodbye on Sunday shopping alone.

Interjections.

**The Acting Speaker:** Order.

Interjections.

**The Acting Speaker:** For the benefit of the record, I will explain my smile. I was admiring the member's persistence and the lost opportunity on the government's side to use four minutes for comments and questions in response to what she had said.

**Mr. Charlton:** I should not say it is a pleasure to rise to speak to this bill, Bill 122, because it is not a pleasure at all. I guess perhaps I could start my remarks by picking up on some of the

comments that have been made in the last few moments.

First, I guess it becomes very noticeable when government members in this House—and not just government members of the current government; it has been a tradition I have watched over the course of the last 11 1/2 years—when government members are uncomfortable and embarrassed by a piece of their government's legislation, they spend a lot of time during the debates barking and yapping without having very much to say, just to annoy those who are speaking on a piece of legislation.

I found it was particularly inappropriate, what I watched going on during the speech by the member for London North (Mrs. Cunningham), some of which I agreed with and some of which I did not agree with, but I sat and listened, at least.

I would like to say to the member for Nepean (Mr. Daigeler)—and again, I do not wish to defend the member for London North, because I am not aware of whether she has asked for additional spending or not—this party has asked for additional spending, but the member for Nepean from time to time, instead of just reading the stuff that is pumped out by the Treasurer and the Treasury, should take the time to read material that is put out by the opposition parties and not just the headlines in the media.

For example, when this budget was tabled last spring, we put out a counterbudget package that, yes, has a number of spending proposals that were in addition to what the government proposed to spend. As well, we put out a number of additional tax proposals, which I can tell the member for Nepean were far less regressive and far more useful and progressive, in terms of their approach to fairness, than the one we are dealing with here today in Bill 122.

I think it is time some of us understood what this dollars-and-cents debate is about that we go through in this Legislature from time to time.

1740

I would like to put a few things on the record today that just came to light this morning in the standing committee on finance and economic affairs.

We were told at the time this budget was tabled that the changes to the retail sales tax from seven per cent to eight per cent and some broadening of the base would raise some \$915 million in additional sales taxes in 1988-89. We were updated this morning by the assistant deputy minister from the Ministry of Treasury and Economics, and although the tax increase itself was only 14 per cent, what we had raised in

additional retail sales tax in this fiscal year was an additional 23.7 per cent. That is the increase in retail sales taxes collected in Ontario; not \$915 million, but \$1.497 billion.

Again, for the member for Nepean, although he has not told anybody yet, the Treasurer is sitting there with half a billion dollars that he did not anticipate in his budget and that has been wrenched out of the pockets of Ontario taxpayers. But when we talk to the Minister of Community and Social Services or the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley) or any number of other ministers across the way, they have no dollars to do the things they legitimately say they would do if they had the dollars.

That is half a billion dollars the Treasurer did not know he was going to get, or if he did, he certainly did not set it out in the budget. The figure he set out here in the budget paper was \$915 million. A total of \$1.497 billion came out of the taxpayers in this province, in addition to all of those taxes we have collected in the past—\$1.497 billion which would otherwise have been spent on consumption, on consumer goods and services. I think we understand that those goods and services represent jobs in the province.

We have stood here on both sides of this House talking about the potential economic problems that will confront Ontario as a result of the free trade pact. We have stood here in this House talking about the problems of infrastructure in the municipalities in terms of being able to renew their water systems, their sewer systems and so on. Unfortunately, we have had a government that has taken the position that it has to wait for the federal government to act before anything significant can be done to address that infrastructure renewal question.

I am going to take members back through a bit of history. I thought it might be useful in this debate, around this particular bill, if we had a look at what some of the present members of the executive council, the cabinet of this province, would have said about this budget just four or five short years ago. I heard the word "hypocrisy" used in some of the comments that were being yelled back and forth just a short time ago, and I think some of the members of this House need to spend just a little bit of time thinking about what they say and what it means, both in the past and in the present.

Here is a quote from Hansard of July 7, 1982. This quote is from a member who is no longer with us, Mr. Breithaupt, a former member of the Liberal caucus from Kitchener: "I recognize that the government majority is probably going to



stand by the Treasurer, but I do believe that these exemptions have value to the people of the province, and that they deal with particular things that can be attended to without upsetting the budgetary process and the needs of the province."

I picked that quote by a member who is no longer with us simply because it reflects a comment that I have heard both of the opposition parties making again this year in the face of a majority government, that regardless of the debate and regardless of what people really know is right or good or wrong, the majority stands by the Treasurer and the bill goes through.

I have some quotes here from the member for Renfrew North (Mr. Conway) in that same debate in 1982: "...our ongoing concern about broadening of the base for the application of the retail sales tax." This was part of a fairly lengthy dissertation that the member for Renfrew North did on the retail sales tax changes in 1982. I will not read it all, because I do not want to waste the time of the House totally with a lot of what, in my view, is just rhetoric, but there are a few cogent points in the speech. The first one that I have just quoted was making a point about serious concerns about expanding the base, those things that are covered by the tax at all. Members will see a number of other references to this throughout the quotes that I will use today.

We have here a government that chose again to expand the base of the retail sales tax in Ontario; a government party that, for many years in opposition, criticized and belittled each and every effort on the part of the former Conservative government to expand that base.

"We are not at all happy about the sales tax provisions in this particular budget, and we will undertake such actions as we deem necessary and responsible to continue to draw to the attention of the Treasurer and the government, as well as to the attention of the public at large, the serious and negative effect this sales tax policy is currently having and is going to continue to have upon the economy of this province...."

"None of us in this opposition wish to be considered difficult or obstructionist. We feel there is a responsibility, however, to fully ventilate the mounting frustration we have identified."

Again, I use that quote from the speech on the retail sales tax bill in 1982 because of some of the things that have been said here this year about the opposition being irresponsible, about the opposition taking inordinate amounts of time on particular pieces of legislation.

I want to say very honestly that we feel very much in 1988 as the member for Renfrew North felt in 1982 about the seriousness of the legislation that we are dealing with and about our responsibility to ensure, to the best of our ability, not only that that legislation is very thoroughly reviewed. We had to fight with this piece of legislation to get it out to committee, the same with the Workers' Compensation Board legislation, to ensure that there would be hearings on those pieces of legislation, hearings that the government did not want to have occur. It is all part of positions that this government has strongly advocated in the past, and yet they come so reluctantly to the things that they fought so hard for, over and over and over again.

Here is another comment in that same debate by the member for Renfrew North: "We feel the sales tax policy of this government is wrong, is having a very negative effect upon the economy we all seek to rehabilitate, and we feel very much that it is going to be our responsibility to discuss those matters fully in a committee of this House."

Again, that is the same reference, and I point that out yet again, I guess, to try to elicit from the government why we find so much reluctance in terms of making the processes around this place more open and public, something they fought for for so long.

I would like to move now to the Premier (Mr. Peterson) in his former role as the Leader of the Opposition in those days: "How can the Treasurer extract all these consumption taxes and regressive taxes from those people least able to pay? He is increasing retail sales tax by 28 per cent."

That was 1982. As I set out just a few moments ago, this year's score is almost 24 per cent. I personally do not see very much difference, especially when you consider that the 24 per cent in the retail sales tax in 1988 is 24 per cent of a substantially larger number than the 28 per cent in 1982 was.

**1750**

**Mr. Faubert:** It was 14 per cent yesterday. You guys can't make up your minds.

**Mr. Charlton:** That is my problem. The member has been sitting there throughout my comments, but he has not listened to any of them. I explained that and I am not going to explain it again. He should read Hansard.

**Mr. Faubert:** I'll read Hansard, but it doesn't make any more sense when you read it than when you listen to it.

**Mr. Charlton:** Oh, it does, my friend. You just never take the time to listen.



**The Acting Speaker: Order.**

**Mr. Charlton:** The 14 per cent was the increase in the tax. The 23.7 per cent is the increase in the take this year. That is how much extra they got out of the pockets of Ontarians. According to the assistant deputy minister from Treasury and Economics this morning in the standing committee on finance and economic affairs, 23.7 per cent—\$1,497,000,000—was the increase in the take this year.

I have momentarily lost my place, but I will find it again very quickly. Here it is. It is the Premier: "How can the Treasurer extract all these consumption taxes and regressive taxes from those people least able to pay?" He is talking here about the same retail sales tax that we are extending yet further into the pockets of the poor and those who are least able to pay.

"He is extracting, in those categories alone, close to \$2 billion." The categories he is referring to there are several taxes. In this particular case, it was something in the range of \$825 million in retail sales tax. As I have already pointed out, that huge grab in 1982 pales compared to either the originally projected grab of this year of \$915 million or the actual grab of \$1,497,000,000. It pales terribly.

The point, I guess, is that the Premier understood in clear terms in 1982 that the retail sales tax was a regressive tax that adversely affected those least able to afford it. He goes on: "I know, and the Treasurer knows, he got a lot of advice from economists saying he could not whack the already overburdened taxpayer at this time. Will he not admit that he does not understand the plight of some of these people and that he responded in an incorrect manner to the economic problems in the province at this time?"

Perhaps we could expect the same kind of admission by the Premier in his present role. What was appropriate in 1982 is appropriate in 1988, because the tax is still a regressive tax, as the Premier has said. The Premier goes on in that same debate: "The reality is that sometimes the Treasurer talks about essentiality, and sometimes he does not, to suit the purposes of his new round of tax and revenue grabs for his budget. Does the Treasurer not agree with me that his new round of tax increases hits the poor far harder than it hits the rich? Was that the intention of his budget, to extract more out of the poor?"

Perhaps the Premier should answer his own questions. It is my view that the job of the opposition in this province is to hold the government accountable not only for what it is doing today, but for what it has led the people of

Ontario by its rhetoric in the past to believe it will do. I do not think there will be any doubt in anybody's mind when I go through the quotes that I have that everybody in this province believed no Liberal government would ever dare to tamper with, expand the base of or increase the retail sales tax.

This time the Premier is asking a question of his predecessor in the Premier's chair:

"I am sure the Premier, because he has a rudimentary knowledge of a wide number of things, is familiar with Samuelson's book on economics in which the author says about customs and sales taxes, 'In order of regressiveness, these would probably come first.' How does the Premier square that with the Treasurer's statement of last week that 'I do not think the sales tax is as regressive as the member believes it is'?"

The Premier sets out in that question very clearly his view that the retail sales tax in this province is a regressive tax, that it is a tax on the poor, and perhaps he owes us an answer to that question, as well.

He goes on: "Does he not feel it is unfair to impose these regressive taxes on people least able to pay through the sales tax in order for him to have his transfers wherever he has decided to have them?" The same questions apply to this Treasurer and this Premier that applied in 1982.

Some will say that the circumstance has changed, and for many, the circumstance has changed since 1982. There are some people who are far better off than they were in 1982, but for the poor, for those unable to defend themselves and for those unable to pay this tax, their circumstance has not changed at all. In fact, as the government is well aware, it has probably worsened as the gap widens, in part because of economic changes that are going on in the society and in part because of the actions of this kind of government imposing this kind of tax that impacts on the poor.

This is the Treasurer again, just a few days later, in a question to the Treasurer of the day, Mr. Miller:

"The provincial expectation that municipal governments are able to assume these additional costs at a time when municipalities are already experiencing fiscal restraint is unrealistic. The budget, in effect, offsets the 1982 transfer payments as announced by the Honourable Claude Bennett on January 28, 1982. At the time when the transfer payments were announced, the association stated its concern regarding the inadequacy of the 10.5 per cent increase over the



amount budgeted for municipalities in 1981. The impact of the Ontario budget now magnifies many times this inadequacy."

This brings up two things I would like to take a few moments on in relation to this bill. I see that we are quickly coming to the hour of six, so I will perhaps make this my last set of comments for today.

What this points to—and I have referred to it earlier—is a government that stands in its place, talks about the terrible straits the municipalities are in in terms of infrastructure renewal, talks about the failures of the federal government to deal with those questions, talks in 1982 about the horrendous burden that the Treasurer of the day placed on those municipalities, but what have we seen here in this piece of legislation this year? Have we seen the Treasurer rescind those burdens that have exacerbated the problems of 1982? No. He has not rescinded them. What did he do? He increased them. He made the problems for the municipalities that much worse.

Mr. Speaker, I see your eyes fixed on the clock. I will move the adjournment of the debate.

On motion by Mr. Charlton, the debate was adjourned.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The government House leader, the member for Renfrew North.

#### BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

**Hon. Mr. Conway:** Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I note that with your wife in the precinct, you are in a particularly good mood, so I shall try to maintain that positive attitude and

report that pursuant to standing order 13, I would like to tell my friend from Mount Forest and others that the business of the House for the coming week is as follows.

On Monday, December 5, we will deal with second reading of Bill 121, An Act to amend the Gasoline Tax Act, and the second reading of Bill 120, An Act to amend the Tobacco Tax Act. Any votes relating to the second reading of these bills will be stacked until Wednesday, December 7, at 5:45 p.m.

On Tuesday, December 6, we will deal with a number of bills awaiting third reading as well as a number of private bills awaiting second and third reading, as listed in the Orders and Notices paper. We will also continue with the adjourned debate on the report of the standing committee on resources development on accidents and fatalities in Ontario mines.

On Wednesday, December 7, we will continue the adjourned debate on Bill 122, An Act to amend the Retail Sales Tax Act. Any votes relating to the second reading of Bill 122 will be stacked until 5:45 that afternoon, as well as those earlier stacked for the same day.

On Thursday, December 8, in the morning, we will consider private members' business standing in the names of Mr. Epp and Mr. Wildman. In the afternoon on Thursday, we will deal with the estimates of the Office of the Premier, the Cabinet Office and the Office of the Lieutenant Governor.

The House adjourned at 6:01 p.m.

## ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS IN ORDERS AND NOTICES

TRANSPORTATION OF DANGEROUS  
GOODS

**375. Mr. Jackson:** Would the Minister of Energy provide details of the transportation of radioactive materials throughout the province by Ontario Hydro between July 31, 1987, and August 1, 1988, including (a) routes, (b) cargo, (c) quantity, (d) frequency of trips, (e) mode of transport. [Tabled October 17, 1988]

**Hon. Mr. Wong:** Attached is the information

on the transportation of 1,132 shipments of radioactive materials throughout the province by Ontario Hydro over the period July 31, 1987, and August 1, 1988.

Of these 1,132 shipments, 161 were of material that required accident-resistant containers.

More detailed information on any of the types of shipments can be provided, if required.

**Summary of Ontario Hydro  
Radioactive Material Shipments by Road  
Between July 31, 1987, and August 1, 1988**

<b>Radioactive Material Type</b>	<b>No. of Shipments</b>
Type B quantity (levels requiring accident-resistant containers) i.e., mainly Cobalt 60 and spent resins and filters	161
Type A quantity (levels requiring containers resistant to rough handling accidents) i.e., mainly low-level radioactive materials	67
Empty packages (with low levels radioactive residue)	146
Low specific activity quantity (levels requiring strong industrial containers) i.e., mainly low level waste such as paper towels, rags, contaminated clothing	547
Excepted quantity (levels requiring general packaging) i.e., urine samples from atomic radiation workers	211
	1,132

**Typical Shipping Routes**

Ontario Hydro uses a variety of major roadways when shipping radioactive material. In addition to the origin and destination, the route is also dependent on road and traffic conditions.

Bruce nuclear power development (BNPD) to AECL (Chalk River and Ottawa): Highway 21 north to Highway 26 east to Highway 11 north to Highway 17 east.

BNPD to Pickering nuclear generating station (PNGS)/Darlington (DNGS): Bruce county road 20 to Highway 9 east to Highway 400 south to Highway 401 east (to Brock Road for PNGS, Courtice Road for DNGS).

PNGS to DNGS: Brock Road to Highway 401 east, Courtice Road exit.

PNGS/DNGS to AECL (Chalk River and Kanata): Highway 401 east to Highway 41 north,

then Highway 17 west to CRNL, or Highway 17 east to AECL Kanata.

**Weights of Radioactive Material  
Transport Package**

Ontario Hydro has no records of the weights involved in their shipments of radioactive material.

The weight of material in the packages can vary from a few grams for samples to a few thousand kilograms for the contents of the type B tritiated heavy water package.

The maximum weight expected to be carried in a type A or type B package is taken into account during the design of these packages. Routine shipments of radioactive material in strong industrial containers are well within the weight limitations for these containers.



## TRIP TO CHINA

**384. Mr. Harris:** Will the Minister of Northern Development provide the details of the province's share of funding for a trip to China by a delegation from Ear Falls which was passed by the Ear Falls council at a special meeting held on August 31, 1988? Specifically, would the minister indicate what the trip was for, who attended, how much was budgeted, what share was covered by the province of Ontario, under what program or from what fund was the provincial funding to be made available and did the trip ever take place and what was the outcome? [Tabled November 3, 1988]

**Hon. Mr. Fontaine:** The closure of Stelco's Griffith iron mine in April 1986 placed the township of Ear Falls under severe economic stress. An economic development office was established to assist the community to arrange new industry.

The township was approached by Ralph Yapp of Ryco International of Winnipeg to examine the potential of establishing a sawmill complex in Ear Falls to provide much-needed lumber products to the People's Republic of China. Earlier trips to China by Yapp had established that the opportunity was there and it was decided that a delegation from Ear Falls should travel to China to formally negotiate a contract.

The trip took place from October 4 to 19, 1988, with Reeve Stan Leschuk and Economic Development Officer Fred Andersen representing the town of Ear Falls. They were accompanied by Ralph Yapp. The delegation returned from China with a contract to supply 100,000 cubic metres of rough lumber at a value of about \$4 million. Further contracts are being negotiated.

Ear Falls' budget for the trip was \$4,000 per person, of which up to 75 per cent will be covered

by the province of Ontario. The funds for the assistance to Ear Falls will come from the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines' industrial assistance subactivity within the northern development program.

## RESPONSE TO PETITION

## MADAWASKA HIGHLANDS REGIONAL TRUST PARK

Sessional paper P-34, re Madawaska Highlands Regional Trust.

**Hon. Mr. Kerrio:** The Madawaska Highlands Regional Trust proposal has been advanced by the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, which is a nongovernment charitable organization. It is not a proposal put forth or endorsed by the Ontario government.

The Ministry of Natural Resources' position on resource management in the area is contained within the district land use guidelines and provides for hunting, fishing, trapping and other traditional pursuits which will continue on crown lands in this area, in an environmentally sound manner.

There have been a number of meetings in the local area to discuss the proposal. None of these meetings has been organized by the Ministry of Natural Resources. However, staff from the ministry have attended most, if not all, of the meetings and have outlined ministry plans for the area.

The ministry's land use planning and resource management system provides the public with opportunities to voice their support for, express concerns about or suggest alternatives in the management of natural resources.

On the basis of the above, I see little need for a debate in the Legislature or for government-initiated local hearings on this matter.

**ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS\***  
(130 seats)

First Session, 34th Parliament

**Lieutenant Governor: Hon. Lincoln M. Alexander, PC, QC**

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- |   |  |
|---|--|
| Adams, Peter (Peterborough L)   | <b>Fontaine, Hon. René</b> , Minister of Northern Development (Cochrane North L)           |
| Allen, Richard (Hamilton West NDP)  | <b>Fulton, Hon. Ed</b> , Minister of Transportation (Scarborough East L)                   |
| Ballinger, William G. (Durham-York L)   | Furlong, Allan W. (Durham Centre L)  |
| Beer, Charles (York North L)  | <b>Grandmaitre, Hon. Bernard C.</b> , Minister of Revenue (Ottawa East L)                  |
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| Cleary, John C. (Cornwall L)  | Kormos, Peter (Welland-Thorold NDP)  |
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| Fleet, David (High Park-Swansea L)  |  |



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 Wildman, Bud (Algoma NDP)  
**Wilson, Hon. Mavis**, Minister without Portfolio  
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 Wiseman, Douglas J. (Lanark-Renfrew PC)  
**Wong, Hon. Robert C.**, Minister of Energy  
 (Fort York L)  
**Wrye, Hon. William**, Minister of Consumer and  
 Commercial Relations (Windsor-Sandwich L)

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 Bradley, Hon. James J., Minister of the Environ-  
 ment  
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 Eakins, Hon. John F., Minister of Municipal  
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 Kerrio, Hon. Vincent G., Minister of Natural  
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 Phillips, Hon. Gerry, Minister of Citizenship  
 Wong, Hon. Robert C., Minister of Energy  
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 Wilson, Hon. Mavis, Minister without Portfolio

#### PARLIAMENTARY ASSISTANTS

Ballinger, William G.: assistant to the Minister of Natural Resources (Durham-York L)  
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 Cordiano, Joseph: assistant to the Minister of Tourism and Recreation (Lawrence L)  
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 Ruprecht, Tony: assistant to the Minister of Community and Social Services (Parkdale L)  
 Smith, David W.: assistant to the Minister of Correctional Services (Lambton L)  
 South, Larry: assistant to the Minister of Energy (Frontenac-Addington L)  
 Sullivan, Barbara (Mrs.): assistant to the Minister of Labour (Halton Centre L)  
 Velshi, Murad: assistant to the Minister of Citizenship (Don Mills L)

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Ombudsman: chairman, Miss Nicholas; vice-chairman, Mr. Bossy; members, Messrs.



Carrothers, Charlton, Cousens, Henderson, Mrs. LeBourdais, Messrs. Lupusella, MacDonald, Philip and Pollock; clerk, Franco Carrozza.

Public accounts: chairman, Mr. Philip; vice-chairman, Mr. Pouliot; members, Messrs. Adams, Ballinger, Ms. Collins, Mr. Cousens, Mrs. Fawcett, Miss Martel, Miss Nicholas, Messrs. J. B. Nixon and Villeneuve; clerk, Douglas Arnott.

Regulations and private bills: chairman, Mr. Furlong; vice-chairman, Mr. Lipsett; members, Messrs. Keyes, Kormos, Leone, McCague, Miclash, Pollock, Reville, Smith, and Sola; clerk, Tannis Manikel.

Resources development: chairman, Mr. Laughren; vice-chairman, Mr. Wildman; members, Messrs. Black, Brown, Dietsch, Mrs. Grier, Mrs. Marland, Mr. McGuigan, Mrs. Stoner, Messrs. Tatham and Wiseman; clerk, Lynn Mellor.

Social development: chairman, Neumann; vice-chairman, Mrs. O'Neill; members, Messrs. Allen, Beer, Carrothers, Mrs. Cunningham, Messrs. Daigeler, Jackson, R. F. Johnston, Owen and Ms. Poole; clerk, Todd Decker.

### SELECT COMMITTEES

Education: chairman, Ms. Poole; vice-chairman, Mr. Reycraft; members, Messrs. D. S. Cooke, Furlong, Jackson, R. F. Johnston, Keyes, Mahoney, Miclash, Mrs. O'Neill and Mr. Villeneuve; clerk, Lynn Mellor.

Energy: chairman, Mr. Carrothers; vice-chairman, Mr. McGuigan; members, Messrs. Brown, Charlton, Cureatz, Mrs. Grier, Messrs. Matrundola, M. C. Ray, Runciman, South and Mrs. Sullivan; clerk, Tannis Manikel.

\*The alphabetical list of members appears in each issue. The other lists, brought up to date as necessary, are published in Hansard in the first and last issues of each session and on the first sitting day of each month.

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# Hansard

## Official Report of Debates

### Legislative Assembly of Ontario

**First Session, 34th Parliament**  
Monday, December 5, 1988



Speaker: Honourable Hugh A. Edighoffer  
Clerk of the House: Claude L. DesRosiers

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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday, December 5, 1988

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayers.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### CHILD HAVEN INTERNATIONAL

**Mr. Villeneuve:** It is with a great deal of pride and pleasure that I rise to recognize the founders of Child Haven International. Bonnie and Fred Cappuccino's Child Haven is a registered charity based not only in my riding, but in my own home town of Maxville. Child Haven assists underprivileged and destitute children in Africa and Asia.

The Cappuccinos are today receiving the 1988 honourable mention prize from UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, for the teaching of human rights. This special recognition of Child Haven International is to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This is the first time anyone from Canada has won a UNESCO human rights award recognition.

Fred and Bonnie Cappuccino are parents of 22 children, 20 of whom are adopted from various cultural, ethnic and racial backgrounds; truly a miniature and junior United Nations. The Cappuccinos actively support civil rights movements and truly are living examples of racial justice and help for the underprivileged. Child Haven International has and supports three active projects in India.

It is a pleasure and an honour for me to salute Fred and Bonnie Cappuccino and their Child Haven International on receiving this award from UNESCO, a first for Canada.

### ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

**Mr. Morin:** The environment is not identified as the major issue throughout the world. Although the chorus of alarm is rising, economic expediency still takes precedence over environmental responsibility. I want to bring to the attention of the House the ongoing destruction of Brazil's rain forest. Tropical rain forests, which cover seven per cent of the world's land surface, do much to control the climate of the earth and

contain a great diversity of unique life forms that are now threatened with extinction.

Next month the World Bank is expected to authorize a \$500-million loan to Brazil to enable it to build two large dams on the Xingu River in the Amazon River basin. It is estimated that up to 25 million hectares of vital forest, roughly the size of Great Britain, will be destroyed.

Brazil is saddled with huge debts and it looks to megaprojects for its economic salvation. However, it has a tragic record with hydro projects that irreversibly disrupt nature's ecological balance and destroy the culture and unique lifestyle of its aboriginal peoples.

I urge the federal government to appeal to the World Bank to ensure that this and future loans are granted on the condition of a regard for environmental consequences. The tropical rain forest is a global treasure and responsibility and not the preserve of one nation that can do with it as it wants.

### NIAGARA REGIONAL POLICE

**Mr. Kormos:** The Solicitor General (Mrs. Smith) is now undoubtedly aware that a senior member of the Ontario Police Commission tried to pressure the Niagara Regional Police Commission into dropping its investigation of the Niagara Regional Police Force. Revelations at the Coulter inquiry last week showed that John MacBeth, who was then vice-chairman of the Ontario Police Commission, told the Niagara Regional Police Commission chairman, Denise Taylor, with respect to her investigation of the force: "The Solicitor General appoints you. I am telling you that he is not pleased with you, and at such time as your position comes up for reappointment...well, need I say more?"

Evidence at the inquiry further suggests that Mr. MacBeth took this position at the behest of then-chief James Gayder, one of the primary subjects of the investigation.

That any official of the Solicitor General's office would interfere in this manner is shocking and intolerable. More shocking is that this matter may not even become a subject of inquiry of the Coulter commission because it was not originally included by the Solicitor General in its terms of

reference. At the same time, the inquiry council appears reluctant to pursue the matter.

Surely, in view of this event, we can expect the Solicitor General to review the terms of reference, to expand them where indicated and to provide funding to the region for its involvement. The Solicitor General's office appears to have served the Niagara Regional Police Commission ill and it is, I submit, obligated to facilitate an expansion of the inquiry.

#### TEMAGAMI DISTRICT RESOURCES

**Mr. Harris:** The entire community of Temagami is on the verge of being wiped out. The impending closure of William Milne and Sons lumber and the loss of 200 direct jobs will devastate the region. The economy will suffer, affecting retailers, school boards and municipal, health and social services. The people of Temagami will be left without a future.

In the wake of this devastation, the Premier (Mr. Peterson) has been going around blaming everyone in sight. He blames the bank, he blames company management, he blames the people of Temagami, he even blames the native community. While it is clear that this mess is a direct result of his own action over the past two years, the Premier of the most powerful province in Canada accepts no responsibility, provides no leadership and offers no hope.

The sad truth is that the people of Temagami have been sold out. They have been sold out by a Liberal Premier who does not respect the rights of northern residents, northern workers, northern conservationists and northern natives. They have been sold out by a short-sighted and, I would say, arrogant government, including the MPP for the area. They collectively will go down in history as members of a party who sacrificed an entire town and its people for their own political careers. The question on the minds of many northerners these days is not: What happened in Temagami? We know what happened. The real question is: Who is next?

#### CONSTITUENCY EVENT

**Mr. Callahan:** I rise to give a message to my fellow colleagues in the Legislature as well as to my constituents in my home riding of Brampton South. This Sunday, December 11, we will celebrate our third annual get-together with the constituents in my riding. I urge other members of the Legislature to do this as well on an annual basis. What in fact it does is allows their constituents to see them face to face on at least one occasion other than election day.

We also take the opportunity on this occasion to suggest that these people consider the fact that not all people in the riding are necessarily going to have a Christmas where they are going to have sufficient to eat. We urge the people that come to my riding meetings on these particular occasions to bring nonperishable food with them. I invite all the members here, if they happen to be riding through the marvellous riding of Brampton South, to drop in. But they should make certain they bring along a little food, because I understand my constituents will be doing that.

1340

#### SUPPORT PAYMENTS

**Miss Martel:** I would like to bring to the attention of the Minister of Community and Social Services (Mr. Sweeney) and the Attorney General (Mr. Scott) a serious problem which has developed over family benefits and court order payments.

The cases in my office all involve women on mother's allowance, but the problem could well involve men on father's allowance as well. The Ministry of Community and Social Services requires people on mother's and father's allowance to go through court to obtain support payments. Once the court decides the amount to be paid, the ministry automatically deducts this amount from the mother's allowance cheque.

In theory, once a court order is established, money from the supporting parent is to be paid directly to the support and custody order enforcement branch, and then to the mother. If the money is not forthcoming from the supporting parent, the enforcement branch is to proceed legally to garnishee wages so the mother is not out of money every month.

In reality, however, in spite of the court order, the support and custody branch is so backlogged that it cannot proceed against the defaulting parent. Further, both the support and custody branch and the ministry have argued that a period of at least three months must pass to see if a pattern emerges in terms of these delayed payments.

Therefore, the mother is having the entire amount of the court order deducted from mother's allowance, but she is not receiving the court-ordered payment or is receiving it late and cannot budget at all.

If the Ministry of Community and Social Services is going to insist on a mother proceeding against another supporting parent, then the mother should not suffer financially as a consequence. The ministry should continue to pay full



benefits and the support and custody branch should direct the court-ordered payment to the ministry instead of to the mother.

### BIRTHDAYS

**Mr. J. M. Johnson:** Since this is the Christmas season, I thought the members would be interested in knowing that two of my colleagues on my immediate right, the member for London North (Mrs. Cunningham) and the member for Simcoe West (Mr. McCague), are celebrating their birthdays today. That in itself is a special event, but what is even more important is that my youngest grandson was born this morning at 5:30.

### STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY

#### RACE RELATIONS

**Hon. Mr. Phillips:** I am happy to report to the House on a successful race relations conference which was held this past weekend. Because race relations is such a fundamental issue, it was gratifying to see that over 130 delegates were in attendance at this first race relations conference for municipalities.

I was very pleased to participate personally and the delegates who are race relations members for municipalities are to be congratulated for their participation and for helping to organize the conference. This conference was sponsored by the Ministry of Citizenship.

I am also pleased to note that of the 24 race relations committees in Canada, 17 of them are located here in Ontario. I hope that the conference at least partially demonstrated to the delegates the opportunity to create additional race relations committees here in Ontario. I would add that the services of our race relations directorate in the Ministry of Citizenship are available to assist in that.

It is important for all of us in this House to remember that potential problems and issues relating to race relations are the responsibility of all of us, municipalities, communities, urban and rural. I think members will find that the delegates to the race relations conference for municipalities and all the others who are concerned about these issues can be pleased with our progress to date.

Having said that, I know that all of us, at all levels of government and in all parts of society, recognize that we must do more. The goal for all of us is to create in this province a fair, equitable and prosperous province. We cannot and we must not shrink from this goal.

### RESPONSES

#### RACE RELATIONS

**Mr. B. Rae:** In response to the minister's statement, which I must confess does not really tell us anything with respect to the government's plans in this particular area, perhaps the minister needs reminding, and I am sure the government does, that it was in May 1985 that the Premier (Mr. Peterson), who was then the Leader of the Opposition, agreed with me, when I was the leader of the third party, that we needed to create a government that would be committed to establishing affirmative action and employment equity programs in both the public and private sectors. That was in the accord that was signed by us on May 27, 1985. It is one of the unfinished items on that agenda which has not been addressed by this government and has not been addressed by this particular minister.

It is a sad fact that the record of the Peterson government with respect to employment equity is worse than that of the Mulroney government. The Mulroney government at least has passed a law which deals with companies that do business with the government of Canada. It has passed a law which requires reporting, which is beginning to take place.

In this province, we have had no initiatives by the government of Ontario in the private sector. We have had one initiative in the public sector, and that is the so-called I Count survey. But apart from the census in the public sector, we have had no concrete, specific action by this government taken to deal with the problem of discrimination on a systemic basis in the workplace.

It has obviously been decided by the government and indeed, I would suspect because of the way things work in this government, by the Premier, that it is simply too difficult an issue to be dealt with by means of new legislation. I am here to tell the government that unless it is prepared to bring in new legislation, this kind of historic step will not happen.

I am also here to tell the government that it will have an opportunity in the near future, when we debate a private member's bill in my name, to begin to recognize that affirmative action and employment equity are ideas whose time and need have come, not only in government but indeed throughout our society.

We have to deal directly with the fact that there are rates of unemployment among our handicapped and disabled communities which can no longer be accepted or tolerated by any of us, and there are still very widespread feelings in a great



many visible minority communities that the door is not as open to them for promotion, advancement and responsibility as it needs to be in our society.

The record is clear. The only effective way for government to show this kind of leadership is to bring in laws on affirmative action and employment equity that will ensure that fairness becomes not simply a matter of rhetoric but a matter of law, and that opportunity becomes not a matter of rhetoric but a matter of law and of right as well.

These are the changes that we are going to be proposing. We had hopes and, indeed, expectations that these were things the government would have put its mind to back in 1985. We continue to have the hope and, indeed, the expectation that even with this bloated majority, the government will act on behalf of visible minorities, on behalf of the disabled in this community, on behalf of all of us to ensure that we do finally have a place for everyone in this province.

**Mr. Brandt:** I would like to congratulate the minister on the hosting of the conference, since I believe very strongly that these race relations programs and discussions are ones that should not be limited just to provincial responsibility but in fact are vital at the local level.

Communities' needs differ. As the minister is well aware, there are different ethnic groups represented in the various municipalities and throughout the local governments in our province, and I think it is important that we do involve those local people to the extent that it is possible.

I would like to remind the minister, however, and he failed to mention this in his statement, that the first province in the entire country that had a human rights commission and entrenched a code in its legislation to protect the rights of minorities was in fact Ontario. We have had a progressive record that is an example to the other nine provinces in this country. We have, in a very real sense, led the way. I would say to the minister that the foundation upon which he is building is a very solid and very sound one.

We have to continue to be, obviously, very sensitive to the needs of minorities and ethnic groups in our multicultural heritage in this province and in this country, and Ontario plays a very leading role in that. The last statistics I saw indicated that about 50 per cent of all immigrants who came from the various countries of the world came here to Ontario. Of that 50 per cent, fully half of those came right here to the Metropolitan Toronto area. So it is vitally important that we be

a leader in this respect, that we understand the needs, the aspirations, the difficulties and the complexities of people who come from various other countries of the world and that these race relations committees reflect those needs and requirements on the part of the peoples who choose Canada and Ontario as their home.

I want to indicate to the minister in a very real sense that our party will work co-operatively in a positive environment to assist in whatever way we can to make Ontario very truly a home for those people who have chosen Canada as the place in which they want to live, to raise their families and to build a better future for all of us.

1350

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### WORKERS' COMPENSATION

**Mr. B. Rae:** I have some questions today for the Solicitor General (Mrs. Smith) as well as for the Minister of Labour. It is my understanding that the Solicitor General is going to be here and I just wanted to give the government House leader a little bit of warning in that regard.

I will turn to a question to the Minister of Labour. It concerns 24 individuals, all of whom won their cases with the Workers' Compensation Appeals Tribunal on this question of chronic pain—the appeals tribunal is saying that they did have sufficient pain and suffering and that they deserved permanent pensions from the Workers' Compensation Board—and the decision on the part of the Workers' Compensation Board to exercise that obscure but very pernicious section of the Workers' Compensation Act called section 86n, which gives the Workers' Compensation Board the power to overrule the appeals tribunal.

I wonder if the minister would agree with me that in the interest of justice, it would make most sense for the minister to accept very speedily a simple amendment to the Workers' Compensation Act, which I am proposing; that is, that section 86n be dropped, that workers who have won their appeal at the Workers' Compensation Appeals Tribunal be recognized as having won that appeal, and that people who have been fighting literally since 1982 and 1983 to win a pension from the Workers' Compensation Board finally be granted those pensions which are still being held up because of this action by the board.

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** As the Leader of the Opposition knows, section 86n was incorporated in the statute in Bill 101, which this House passed in late 1984 and which came into effect in 1985.

It is an interesting proposal he makes to bring about a speedy amendment. I am sure that, were



an amendment put before this House, the Leader of the Opposition and others would want public hearings on that to ensure that fairness and equity be done. He knows quite well that I am not empowered under the statute to superimpose my views on what the board should do when it determines to take a section 86n review.

I do believe it does merit reconsideration, and I have told the member on other occasions that as we look next year to a green paper on questions about administration and adjudication, one of the questions we have to ask ourselves is whether the current review of decisions made by the tribunal is the appropriate one.

**Mr. B. Rae:** While the minister dithers, dallies and delays, the fact is that Mr. Villanucci, for example, was injured on June 20, 1980. He was able to win his appeal after 27 days of hearings in front of the Workers' Compensation Appeals Tribunal from June to October 1986. This is how slowly justice works in this province for injured workers—a six-year wait. Then in May 1987, the WCAT decision came down, saying okay. But he is still having to wait because the board has decided in its wisdom that the time for making written submissions is going to go on until February 28, 1989, supplementary written submissions are extended to May 1 and the possibility of oral submissions on substantive issues are after that time.

Surely the minister would agree with me that if he stood out of this place and were a worker and got injured in 1980, he would not like to have to wait until 1989 before he might, and only might, get justice from the government of Ontario.

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** I want to tell the Leader of the Opposition that the kinds of delays that we experience in this system—and I think the Villanucci case and the other chronic pain cases indicate that quite clearly—are something we really must direct our attention to. We cannot allow a situation where decisions are taking a long time within the Workers' Compensation Board and thereafter are taking a very long time before the Workers' Compensation Appeals Tribunal.

In this final level of appeal and on questions of policy there is that time delay. It is not something that I am happy about, and it is something we should direct our minds to on an urgent basis. I have told the Leader of the Opposition and this House that we will be doing that, that this is part of the analysis of the worker compensation system that we must get on with, that administration, adjudication and time delays are of serious concern to anyone who has any concern at all

about compensation matters in this province. We are moving ahead on that score.

**Mr. B. Rae:** We just had second reading on a bill amending the Workers' Compensation Act. If my friend were interested in amending the Workers' Compensation Act, he could have done it before last week when he asked this House to pass it at second reading. He has been the minister for a year and a half. It is just not good enough to stand up and say he is concerned about it and he wants to do something about it next year. He has had the power to do something about it.

I again want to go back to the minister. On Friday, the president of the Ontario Federation of Labour was turned away by a security guard at the Workers' Compensation Board because he wanted to make submissions to the board itself about the unfairness of what is being done to these injured workers. Does the minister not feel it is most unfair to these injured workers, after they have been given an award by the Workers' Compensation Appeals Tribunal, that they are still not able to collect a penny in an award from the compensation board for that particular pension when it has been granted by the appeals tribunal, when they have won their case at the hearing? Does he not think it is most unfair to them that they are still having to wait for their cheques and may never get their cheques because the board can still say: "No deal. As a matter of policy, we have decided not to award any pensions in this area"?

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. Minister.

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** The Leader of the Opposition makes a very complex issue—that is, the issue of chronic pain—seem entirely simple. I want to tell him that I do have a great deal of concern that there are workers who because of this process, which takes a very long time, are not being compensated and, worse still, are not sure whether they are going to get compensated.

I am also concerned about the kind of hypocrisy that the Leader of the Opposition shows in this House when I introduced a bill on June 20 and he said this bill must have the most extensive kinds of public hearings and then this afternoon he comes before this House and says we should introduce an amendment that has far-reaching implications for everyone who is concerned about workers' compensation and we should not discuss it and we should not debate it; we should just eliminate section 86n without any public hearings and without consultation. I cannot accept that.



**Mr. Speaker:** Does the Leader of the Opposition wish to stand down the next question?

**Mr. B. Rae:** Is "hypocrisy" now acceptable as a term, Mr. Speaker, just out of curiosity?

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** Mr. Speaker, I just want to withdraw.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you.

#### AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

**Mr. Brandt:** My question is to the Premier. It relates to automobile insurance rates in the province and the Mercer report, which was in fact just tabled today.

The Premier will recall that the Treasurer (Mr. R. F. Nixon), who also had the attendant responsibility for insurance rates some time ago, indicated that the mandate of the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board would be to establish reasonable rates or rate ranges for all types of motor vehicle insurance.

I realize the report that Mercer has in fact prepared is not binding on the board, but that report indicates very clearly that there are going to be very substantial rate increases in this province. It is recommending something in the order of 35 per cent to 40 per cent as an approximate range. Can the Premier indicate if he thinks that range is fair and equitable in light of other increases for costs in our society today?

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** I believe the minister can bring the honourable member up to date on that.

1400

**Hon. Mr. Elston:** I want to thank the honourable member for the question. As the leader of the third party pointed out, the report itself was presented to the auto board today and will form the basis of a very public and open hearing, so that the very questions which he is talking about can be investigated very thoroughly.

From our point of view, the recommendations which are there are obviously not binding on the board, nor are they binding when it comes to setting the rates, but they are suggestions with respect to how the discussion with respect to new rates might be discussed.

The honourable gentleman has put his finger right on the particular problem at hand. In fact, those rate hearings or range-of-rate hearings will start next Monday, with anybody who wishes to participate being able to put his points forward.

**Mr. Brandt:** I would imagine that there will be a number of participants who will come before the board to express their views.

The reason that I raise this question with the Premier, and I will now direct it to the minister, is that during a fairly recent discussion with the people of Ontario which took place about a year ago and which resulted in a certain number of votes being cast for a particular political party, as I recall, one of the promises that was made at that time was that there was in fact a plan to lower rates in this province.

There was a plan. The spokesman, and that individual is now the Premier, indicated he could not disclose the nature of that, because the plan was going to be unfolded within the fullness of time. I guess we have now reached the point where we would like to be given the opportunity to hear what that plan might be.

I wonder if the minister is in a position to disclose the long-awaited plan to control or reduce insurance rates. Would he disclose that to the House today?

**Hon. Mr. Elston:** I was expecting perhaps some questions today from the opposition party; I had not expected that this issue would be raised by the member for Sarnia, who is obviously becoming the proponent of another way of dealing with insurance.

I can tell the honourable gentleman that particular reference should be made to eliminating discriminations as between marital status, age, sex and handicap, which were indicated as things that should in fact be taken out of the rate-setting policy of the insurance industry in Ontario. Those sorts of things are occurring.

As the member will know, the hearings that have been put in process and have gone on since August and have built to this final-stage hearing, the fourth of a series of hearings, will indicate how those sorts of criteria can be eliminated to get fairer and adequate premiums for the people of the province.

**Mr. Brandt:** I want to indicate to the minister that our position as a party has not changed, and that position is consistent with that of many experts and consumer groups which indicated that the government of the day was going in the wrong direction with respect to its policies. Many, many people across this province said that what the government was proposing to do would not work.

If the minister is indicating that the 35 to 40 per cent recommendation within the Mercer report is not binding—and I understand that—and that hearings are forthcoming—and I understand that as well—will the minister indicate what level of increase, what percentage increase, if that is to be, is acceptable to his government in light of the



information that he now has at hand, where it indicates that past increases have been insufficient in terms of the annualized review and the rates that were brought into being in this particular province?

**Hon. Mr. Elston:** The honourable gentleman does not understand, I think, what the role of the board is. The role of the board is to complete the mandate, which is to inquire into what the rates or ranges of rates are to be. He will understand that an analysis of all the material that is in front of them, including the latest piece of information which was released today, the study done by Mercer on the basis of information provided to it, will allow them to go ahead and put together the ranges of rates and rates to be used in the upcoming future.

The member knows that we will be looking very carefully at that process as it unfolds. It has been a process which, by the way, the public will want to know has been well viewed by participants, whether they be from consumer groups or from industry groups, right on through the entire piece. They have worked very hard on the board, and I extend my congratulations to those members of the board who have had to sit and make very intensive interrogatories and studies into the various questions which have been put before them.

I can tell the honourable leader of the third party that the product has been in fact a very first-class piece of work. I expect that this hearing, which is starting next Monday, as I said, and which is open to all public participants, to be no less thorough and come up with what in effect will be fair rates in Ontario.

#### TACTICAL RESCUE UNITS

**Mr. B. Rae:** I have a question of the Solicitor General. I want to go back to her. To me this is just such a fundamental question of what is being done about the killing of Bernard Bastien, and I really do want to try to resolve this before too long. In her answer to me the other day, the minister said, "We will examine with great care and great concern any recommendations from the inquest and, at that time, will decide whether a public inquiry is necessary."

I would like to remind the minister that there has already been one inquest arising from the killing of a police officer by the tactical rescue unit in the tragic incident that took place in Woodstock in 1984, the killing of Mr. Ross. The Solicitor General will no doubt be aware that the jury in that case did make some very specific recommendations about the uses of radios, about

the information that is provided to all the officers, the kind of advance planning that takes place, the kind of sharing of information that happens between the local police force and the tactical unit. All that is laid out in the inquest which took place on March 1, 1985. Much of what was recommended has not been done. Obviously it has not been done or we would not have had the tragic incident that we had in August near Windsor.

Does the Solicitor General not really think that she owes it to herself, to the Bastien family and indeed to all the citizens of Ontario to have a full inquiry into the uses of these particular units which are far different from anything contemplated when the forces were originally set up in 1976?

**Hon. Mrs. Smith:** The Leader of the Opposition goes from one subject to another, in so far as we are discussing the need to examine very closely the role of the TR units in our policing within the province, which we completely agree with and will do in detail.

The other issue that is raised by the member is the question of radio communication, improved communication and the sharing of systems and information between different police forces. This is a matter that has been a very grave concern to all of us and to the forces themselves. As the member will know, we are working now and at this time putting tremendous money into telecommunication systems in order to improve such communication.

I will continue to work on this as a priority item and I think if one good thing can come out of this terrible tragedy, it is that it will indeed emphasize to all police forces the need to work together to resolve these problems.

**Mr. B. Rae:** The first recommendation of the jury in the Ross inquest was as follows:

"All members of police forces involved in an operation must attend a formal joint briefing headed by appropriate expertise of each unit involved and ensure all instructions are clearly outlined. All members must be aware of the position of all officers involved in the operation and changes in position communicated."

Can the minister stand up in this House today and give us her personal assurance that everything associated with this particular recommendation has been carried out by her, by her ministry and by people operating under her instructions within the Ontario Provincial Police? Can she tell us that right now?

**Hon. Mrs. Smith:** As the member well knows, this did not involve one police force; this

involved three police forces, which is part of the problem. The communications system between them is definitely part of the problem. It is obvious that I cannot assure that these things were all acted upon, since this case outlines the fact that there is a great deal more to be done. I assure the member that I am looking at this, looking at how this case once again pinpointed the co-operation that is not occurring and looking to make sure that such co-operation is brought into place between police forces.

**1410**

**Mr. B. Rae:** This is not good enough. We have the death of a police officer in 1984. He was killed, it would appear, at least partly as the result of poor communication between different police forces involved in a particular incident. One of the police forces involved was the tactical rescue unit.

We now have this tragic incident three years later in 1988 in which Mr. Bastien was killed when the tactical unit was sent out thinking it was going after a suicidal young man. When the tactical units were set up, it was never intended that they would be used in this way. In the 1,400 incidents that have been responded to by the special tactical unit of the Metropolitan Toronto Police, there had not been one person killed.

Now we have this problem with the tactical unit, and there clearly is a need for an inquiry. The Bastien family is not getting the answers it needs. If any one of us as a citizen were placed in the situation Mrs. Bastien was in, we would be crying to the hilltops for a public inquiry, asking ourselves, "How could the police forces in this province have made such a mistake?" Is she not entitled to an answer to that question?

**Hon. Mrs. Smith:** I quite agree that we have to examine very closely the methods of communication. Once again, the member speaks about communication, which was sadly lacking and which is something I have seen since I first assumed this office as needing close examination. We are expending a great deal of funds and of time on our communication system. We hope to get as much co-operation as possible from the various police forces in order to tie such communications closely together. This is independent of the efforts of a TRU team one way or another. It could happen in almost any crime or any such incident.

However, we have a separate issue altogether, which the Leader of the Opposition has referred to, the appropriate use of TRU teams. We have already put down some restrictions on this. They can be approved only by the top officer of the

OPP in the field division in this area. We are examining this most closely, looking to further restrictions. I quite agree with the member. I commend the use of similar units in the Metropolitan Toronto Police. They show that such units can be used effectively and well, and we will continue to move towards that objective.

#### AFFORDABLE HOUSING

**Mr. Harris:** I have a question for the Minister of Housing. She knows now, as we all know, that as part of his constant search for new sources of revenue, the Treasurer (Mr. R. F. Nixon) has increasingly with each budget put more of the burden of education costs on to the local taxpayer, indeed on to the local property tax.

Now the Treasurer and the Premier (Mr. Peterson) want to add \$5,000 plus carrying costs to the cost of a new home through a new secret \$5,000 education lot levy. What is the Minister of Housing doing to fight this new tax on local home ownership that the Treasurer and the Premier are not only plotting to bring in but now, I gather, have decided to bring in and are out trying to sell to the industry?

**Hon. Ms. Hošek:** As the member well knows, questions of tax policy should be answered by the Treasurer. My concern as Minister of Housing is to make sure that people have as many choices as possible in housing and as much diversity as possible in their choices. I am doing everything I can to make that possible with a variety of policies, the most important of which at this point is the land use policy, in which we are directing municipalities to make sure that in all new development about 25 per cent of what is built is affordable to people of low and moderate income.

**Mr. Harris:** We know the Treasurer wants to introduce lot levies to cover the costs of schools at \$5,000 plus. We now hear that the Treasurer and the Premier are planning to introduce another levy up to \$3,000 a lot for health care.

Is the minister prepared to sit idly by while the Treasurer adds as much as \$10,000, with carrying costs, to the cost of every new home built in Ontario? I ask the minister again: What is she doing as the Minister of Housing, responsible for bringing affordable housing on to the market, to fight what I think are new, diabolical levies that will add \$10,000, on the average, to the price of a new home?

**Hon. Ms. Hošek:** I reiterate that it is the Treasurer's responsibility to set tax policy in this province. Let me also tell the member that he is suffering from a lack of very clear information in



this area, and I would remind him of that as he thinks through the implications of what he has said.

What I am doing in the Ministry of Housing is working with municipalities and with the building community to make sure that many more units of affordable housing are built through our direction to the municipalities, especially in high growth areas, that 25 per cent of the new building that is done will be done to meet the housing needs of low- and moderate-income people.

We are working together with municipalities to identify the ways that will be done, in different ways in different municipalities. We are also doing an enormous amount of social housing building on our own, through the 30,000 units that were mentioned in the budget and through our work with government lands to make sure that on the land we own, the needs for housing of people of low and moderate income are much more adequately met.

**Mr. Harris:** In the midst of the worst housing crisis in our history, at a time when the Minister of Housing is wallowing around with myriad programs, all of which are failing, does she not find it shameful that her colleagues the Premier and the Treasurer are out promoting \$10,000 worth of new levies that will be added to the cost of homes?

Surely the minister will know that these measures will be the final straw and will blow the lid off any possibility of providing affordable housing in almost every region of this province. If she will not stand up for affordable housing, if she does not seem to care about the cost of housing, why does she not step aside and make room for somebody who will fight for affordable housing in this province?

**Hon. Ms. Hošek:** I point out to the member opposite that when I stood up in this House and said we were going to make sure that municipalities met the affordable housing needs of people in this province, his colleague, who was then the critic on Housing, said we were being premature. I also point out to the member opposite that in the last federal election, when every single party came forward with ideas about affordable housing, the member's party seemed to think that there were no problems in Metro, that there were no problems in Ontario. His party did not seem to think anything needed to happen. It seems to me that when someone is called upon to stand up for affordable housing, the member would do well to look at his own benches and look at them closely.

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. That completes that question and response.

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. There are other members who would like to ask questions.

### SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

**Mr. Allen:** I want to ask the Minister of Community and Social Services about the great computer sinkhole that the Provincial Auditor discovered in his ministry. In explaining to the member for Etobicoke-Rexdale (Mr. Philip) the other day how this came about, the minister said it was the complexity of the system that had drawn in so many dollars to fund it and delay its application over the years.

That is the system Judge Thomson described as highly complex, adversarial, stigmatizing and inequitable in the 22 categories over which the bureaucrats of his ministry and its officials in an exquisite kind of torture had to either stretch or shrink its social assistance clients in order to make them fit the system. Judge Thomson has proposed a vast simplification of these categories to three, and this computer system is therefore imminently totally out of date.

Will the minister suspend forthwith any further expenditure on that outmoded system, or is he going to use the investment already made as another excuse for doing nothing to implement the Thomson proposal?

1420

**Hon. Mr. Sweeney:** I understand, since this goes back to 1980, that the consulting firm that was employed was supposedly the best in the business at that time with this kind of computer system. As a matter of fact, the same firm was doing computer systems for banks and trust companies and insurance companies, and it misunderstood or underestimated—that is correct—the complexity of our system at that time. If anything, the system has become more complex in the intervening years because we have attempted to provide services to a wider range of people.

It is quite true that Judge Thomson's report indicated that the number of categories could be cut down to three, but that is only one small part of the system. The system contains many other complexities in addition to that. I would certainly hope that the implementation of that report, or at least partial implementation of that report, would make the existing system a little simpler than it is at the present time.

But it is currently in all of our ministry area offices, and I would be loath at this time to give a

direct answer to the member's question, will we take it out? I cannot say that. At the present time I would have to say no.

**Mr. Allen:** I presume that some of the rest of the complexity has to do with an appeal system that another consultant in the Social Assistance Review Committee review described in exquisite detail as "a fog," and went on to delineate all the elements of fog that pervaded the system. That, in turn, is the computer system that this minister is operating to stretch and twist and contort the lives of ordinary simple people.

One can only conclude that the money has been wasted, that the minister is currently paying 300 consultants up to \$430 a day and at the same time sending children under five, their mothers, the disabled and the ill to food banks in order to make ends meet, and all because the minister refuses to do what is right, that is, to simplify the appeal system. Why does the minister not simply put the money where it is needed, in the people's hands, and get back to his desk and simplify the system?

**Hon. Mr. Sweeney:** As a matter of fact, the system that is now in place in all of our offices, in four municipal offices—and a request has already been received by our ministry for seven other major urban areas to put it in their offices as well—is a great deal simpler than it was when the whole thing started.

The member might be aware of the fact that, if a constituent came into one of our offices wanting some personal information upon which he or she could base an appeal or request further consideration, the turnaround time, because most of it was manual, could have been three to four weeks. It is now two or three hours. Therefore, we have a system in place which allows us to provide information to constituents, clients coming in, which can be turned around in two or three hours instead of several weeks. I think that is a simplification where it really counts, that is of information which the individual client needs; that is what really counts.

#### MUNICIPAL ELECTION

**Mr. Cousens:** I have a question for the Minister of Municipal Affairs. The minister must be aware of the current fiasco in the city of Toronto, where a judicial ruling on spoiled ballots has been requested in the midst of a city-wide recount of the November 14 municipal election results. There were many problems surrounding this year's municipal election and the legitimacy of this election is obviously in question.

What actions is the minister taking to resolve what has become a great embarrassment to this government?

**Hon. Mr. Eakins:** There is no embarrassment whatsoever. Section 42 of the Municipal Elections Act authorizes any municipality to use voting equipment. This provision has been in place since 1972, the member will recall, and this is being used very effectively by other jurisdictions, Etobicoke, Scarborough, North York and others, without any problem whatsoever.

It is my responsibility to put in place the general framework for municipal elections, not to cut paper.

**Mr. Cousens:** We warned that problems were going to happen. In the six short months just before these elections, the minister enacted a series of changes that he calls "framework" that affect the municipal elections. He changed the enumeration process, the structure of Metro Toronto's government, the structure of the school board trustee representation, the nature of campaign expenses and the recount process. What has happened is that his new laws have failed to "improve" the municipal election process in Ontario as he said they would. He shoved them through this House without enough debate. The legislation needs help. Now, in view of the problems experienced across the province, will he take a second look at his municipal election laws, and in the meantime, will he agree to financially assist the city of Toronto if a new election is necessary?

**Hon. Mr. Eakins:** The city of Toronto asked for that authority. Let me tell him, in regard to the Municipal Elections Act, I have had no problems brought to my attention whatsoever. The problem is not with the legislation; the problem is with the machines and that is not the problem of the legislation. If he can tell me where there has been a problem with other parts of the Municipal Elections Act, let me tell him when we discussed it in an all-party committee everyone was on board with the changes. I made changes to suit his party and the official opposition. I believe we have a really good Municipal Elections Act. The problems that are associated with recounts are not the problems of legislation.

#### DRIVERS' LICENCES

**Mr. Matrundola:** My question is to the Minister of Transportation. It has been brought to my attention, from a number of sources, that there is currently a five month waiting period in Toronto for people wanting to take a road test in order to receive a driver's licence.



Many people may not consider this of great importance. But what about the unlicensed person who is offered a job, and needs a vehicle to drive to work, or will have to drive as part of the job. Or the new immigrant who has 60 days to obtain an Ontario driver's licence. Even if he or she books an appointment on the day of his or her arrival, he or she can only drive for 60 days, then will have to wait for 3 months for the test.

Can the minister advise the House as to what steps he will be taking in order to ease this unacceptable situation?

**Hon. Mr. Fulton:** I thank my friend the member for Willowdale for the very appropriate, timely question, one that is of great concern to me, as minister, and certainly to our ministry and this government. Our staff in the driver and vehicles branch is wrestling with this. The five month reference is really the extreme across the province. In most other regions it is somewhat less, in some cases considerably less. Certainly on the question he raises with respect to immigrants and people looking for jobs or where the job is dependent upon having a licence, we would undertake to look at somehow extending that 60-day framework. In fact, we have been criticized from one or two sources for even considering accommodating people, like school bus operators, where they often run their applications through during the summer months which obviously causes a problem, for in fact having given them extra treatment where a job is on the line with respect to the licence.

**Mr. Matrondola:** An employee of his ministry was quoted in the Toronto Star as saying, "We don't know where all these people are coming from." It is public knowledge that immigration into Ontario and Toronto is increasing? Can the minister tell us if he will be improving his ministry's planning so as to better react to changes in demand for services?

**Mr. Brandt:** Where are those people coming from, Ed?

**Mr. Sterling:** Blame it on the feds.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**Hon. Mr. Fulton:** In recognition of the increased demand, we have indeed increased the number of staff in the testing area by nine per cent. The reality is that we are having to cope with a 36 per cent increase in the demand. A lot of that, of course, has to do with the great success of the economy of Ontario, and particularly southern Ontario. Certainly with respect to the Metro region, we are actively looking at relocating the Scarborough testing service. We are

looking at extending hours, including opening the facilities on Saturdays. We have a direct and a very strong interest in reducing this time frame. We will work with the affected parties to the best of our ability.

**1430**

**Mr. Adams:** Good question. Excellent answer.

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. If I could have the attention of all members.

**Mr. Breaugh:** It is just the Liberal rump breaking out.

#### RENTAL HOUSING PROTECTION

**Mr. Breaugh:** I have a question for the Minister of Housing concerning the Rental Housing Protection Act.

The Social Planning Council of Metropolitan Toronto and the Metro Federation of Tenants have now released their study on the difficulties that have been encountered on it. Although their study is quite detailed, they point out that even when the ministry is made aware of violations of the act, it refuses to do anything about it. How does she explain that she has a law on the books, that she is often informed that the law has clearly been violated, and yet she continues to refuse to enforce that law?

**Hon. Ms. Hošek:** When problems with the Rental Housing Protection Act are brought to our attention, we bring them forward. In fact, we laid charges in five cases in 1988 and the member opposite will be aware that just recently, with a property that was owned by Beaconsfield Properties, the landlord was fined \$5,000 for violating the Rental Housing Protection Act. I think that is a very good sign of how seriously we take violations of the Rental Housing Protection Act. We take them forward and we have brought a number of cases forward and one just recently was fined a significant amount of money.

**Mr. Breaugh:** The Highway Traffic Act should get such vigorous prosecution. How does the minister explain matters to Barbara Baillie, who is the last remaining tenant in a building on Millwood Road in East York, about which I talked to the minister earlier? From her perspective, she has watched her landlords illegally evict people from her building. She has watched them get a \$30,000 interest-free loan from the government. She knows that the ministry was informed that the evictions took place illegally and that the act was clearly violated. From her point of view, the ministry rewarded the land-

lords for breaking the law with a \$30,000 interest-free loan and she is looking at a 59 per cent increase in her rent. How does the minister justify that to her?

**Hon. Ms. Hošek:** When there are any allegations of illegal evictions, we deal with those and pass them on, as well, to the Attorney General (Mr. Scott), because it is the Ministry of the Attorney General that deals with violations of the Landlord and Tenant Act.

When there are concerns about illegal evictions, we have a method of dealing with them. We also have a hotline for tenants who have problems associated with the Landlord and Tenant Act and with the Rental Housing Protection Act, and my knowledge is that we have taken a number of cases forward and prosecuted them and that there have been fines for people who have violated the Rental Housing Protection Act.

### TRUANCY

**Mrs. Cunningham:** My question is to the Minister of Education. It has been four years since the Juvenile Delinquents Act was replaced by the Young Offenders Implementation Act, leaving Ontario without a meaningful truancy law that works. As a result of this vacuum, truancy levels have increased substantially. Attendance counsellors and family court officials say they are unable to assist our young people. The numbers are truly a disgrace to this province's educational system. An average of 20,000 children under the age of 16 are declared truant every year. This government once again has shown its great abilities of procrastination in its failure to address this real challenge and provide this province with compulsory attendance legislation.

My question is this. When is this government going to clear up this confusion by drafting long-awaited and promised compulsory attendance legislation?

**Hon. Mr. Ward:** The member has quite correctly pointed out that the new Young Offenders Implementation Act and the repeal of the Juvenile Delinquents Act has, in fact, left something of a legislative void in terms of dealing with the issue of truancy.

But I must say in response to the member, who seems to be putting forward the notion that the power of the courts is perhaps the best way to deal with students who are habitual nonattenders, that it is a point of view that, frankly, I do not share. I believe that our role should be one that emphasizes prevention of the problem, that emphasizes an early intervention and provides

assistance for those students who do habitually go truant.

At the same time though, I do recognize that with the void created by that new federal legislation, there is a need to review the practices and policies as well as the regulations that are currently in effect. That work is ongoing and should be completed in the very near future.

**Mrs. Cunningham:** I find that response to be a nonresponse and very interesting, the same old thing we have been saying for two and a half years. I think that when the minister is asking for input from school boards and professionals, and parents I might add, and they worked very hard over a period of some two and a half years to give specific recommendations to this government regarding a clear policy regarding attendance legislation, the implementation is the responsibility of this Ontario government.

I think that everyone who has been working very hard to give input to the minister deserves a better response than that, so I am going to ask the question again. That is the same answer the minister has been giving for two and a half years, and at the same time he has been asking for more input. What is he going to do with all the input he has been getting for the policy that he wants to make?

**Hon. Mr. Ward:** It could hardly be the same answer, because it is the first time I have been asked the question.

I do want to reiterate one more time for the member, who seems to believe that some sort of quasi-criminal proceeding is the best way to deal with young people who happen to be nonattenders in learning programs offered by our schools, that I fundamentally believe the emphasis should be on prevention and early intervention. The emphasis should be on providing a range of alternative learning programs that will encourage those students to attend.

I can tell the member that in touring this province, I have visited many school jurisdictions which have very aggressive attendance programs. As a suggestion, I invite the member to take a look at the program that is offered by the Fort Frances-Rainy River Board of Education, its extensive attendance counselling program and the tremendous success that it has had. In my view, those kinds of programs are far more effective than any quasi-judicial proceeding in a court.

### HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION

**Mr. D. R. Cooke:** My question is for the Minister of Transportation.



Kitchener and Waterloo have about 200,000 people and Guelph has about 75,000 people. Between these two cities, only 13 kilometres apart, we have a single two-lane highway without controlled access, being used, on average, by about 15,000 cars a day. The only reason we do not have more accidents on this road is that drivers know better than to ever try to pass another car and they time their trips accordingly.

The train service is very poor and I realize that any interest in GO Transit moving this far west will only encourage Via Rail to make it worse.

Is the ministry prepared to reconstruct Highway 7 between Kitchener and Guelph so as to allow it to carry the traffic that needs to move between these two cities?

**Hon. Mr. Fulton:** I appreciate the member's question. It is an issue he has brought to my attention previously, as has his colleague the member for Guelph (Mr. Ferraro).

I recently drove the highway in question and agree with the member that something needs to be done. We have had the study program put together. The funding is in place. We have made that approval. The study of the requirements, whether they are twinning, four-laning, or limiting the access, will start early in the spring of 1989.

**Mr. D. R. Cooke:** I thank the minister very much. I appreciate that answer. I wonder if the minister can tell us when he expects it will be completed.

**Hon. Mr. Fulton:** There is an environmental process to go through. Of course, there will be substantial participation by citizens' groups and other interested parties from within the area. We will deal with it as quickly as we possibly can. I hate to specify a date, but I can give the member and my colleague the member for Guelph the assurance that we will deal with it as expeditiously as possible.

1440

#### AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

**Mr. Kormos:** If I may, a question of the Minister of Financial Institutions: I am referring to the editorial in the Toronto Star of Saturday, December 3, which spoke of increases in premiums to the tune of \$504 million. I am wondering if the minister can respond to that and indicate whether he anticipates if the increases will be in that amount, more or perhaps less as a result of the Kruger report and its recommendations.

**Hon. Mr. Elston:** I want to thank the honourable member for the question. At this

stage, as he knows, the rates or ranges of rates have not yet been determined, but he will be aware that there have been decisions on the first three parts of a four-part industry-wide hearing process. The fourth part will start on December 12.

For my part, just to make the member aware of what has happened today, there was a release of a technical report by William M. Mercer Ltd. which made some recommendations upon which the hearing for the rates or ranges of rates will commence next week. Before we receive that information, it will be difficult to comment further on the question.

I am quite prepared to leave the hearing and the determination of the rates with the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board. They have proven in the past, with respect to their previous three hearings, that they do a very thorough and reasonable job of analysing the material that is available to them and in fact make recommendations where there is a deficiency of same upon which to make good and valid recommendations.

So at this stage, until I hear what the rates are, as proposed and finally determined under the hearings to start next Monday, I am not able to comment further on that number.

**Mr. Kormos:** If the rates set by the board are indeed substantial increases over the rates currently paid, will the government and the minister specifically then consider a government-run auto insurance plan, as that same editorial in the Toronto Star recommends?

**Hon. Mr. Elston:** The honourable gentleman will know that the mandate of the board is to establish fair and equitable rates with respect to insurance. All of us will be waiting, I am sure, to hear the results of the hearings which will come to us after the public and members of industry have a chance to put their case with respect to the recommendations by Mercer.

I can tell the honourable gentleman that at that stage we will then have the board making a determination for us. That is the mandate, the legislation speaks to that as the regimen under which we are operating, and that is in fact what we have at the present.

#### BEEF CATTLE FINANCIAL PROTECTION PLAN

**Mr. Villeneuve:** My question is to the Minister of Agriculture and Food. The minister will be aware that Brussels Stockyards Ltd. went bankrupt some time ago, leaving some 70 creditors. He should also know that there were some 4-H club members who were left unpaid for



cattle that they had sold for their 4-H projects. These young people rely on these sales to the stockyard to purchase next year's calves, for their education and a number of things. Under the ministry's rules, they are not producers and therefore they do not have protection.

Will the minister be prepared to look into this situation and make changes to the beef cattle financial protection plan to prevent such similar occurrences in the future?

**Hon. Mr. Riddell:** We have already looked into the situation. I met with about 30 or 40 farmers who maintain that they have legal claim to the fund, and they certainly spoke on behalf of the 4-H members, who I must say did not cash their cheques after they were issued. As a matter of fact, those cheques have been sitting around now for over two months since the cheques were issued. Of course, you are given a certain period of time in order to cash the cheque before you are eligible under the financial protection plan.

However, it is my understanding that the matter has been taken in hand. I believe the person who is now running the Brussels livestock sales or the former owner of the sales has given some kind of assurance that those 4-H members will be covered under the financial protection plan. I also know that the Live Stock Financial Protection Board is taking those 4-H members into consideration as well.

**Mr. Villeneuve:** I certainly appreciate that the Live Stock Financial Protection Board will be looking into it in detail.

I have another question on that same bankruptcy, on that same subject. Could the minister explain why he has instructed his bureaucrats to literally treat the farmers as criminals when they are trying to collect money that is owed them?

**Hon. Mr. Riddell:** That is not the case. The same point was raised at the meeting I had with the growers in the area, and after we gave our explanation.

It is not beneath some people to abuse any system you put in place. The fact of the matter is that we have to ask very pertinent questions in order to get the information to make a determination as to whether they are eligible under the financial protection plan.

They were not treated criminally in any way. As a matter of fact, there were some people who got up at that meeting and thanked us for the procedures that were followed. They said it was a good procedure, the fact that we sent our people out to the ag rep offices to do the interviewing. They did not have to come in to Toronto. They fully understood the reason the questions had to

be asked, so I am going to tell my friend he is way off base.

#### DISTRICT HEALTH COUNCILS

**Mr. Miller:** I have a question for the Minister of Health. Recently, there has been a rumour circulating in my riding that the district health council is taking over duties from the local hospital board. Can the minister clarify the relationship between the district health councils and the local hospital boards?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** I want to thank my colleague the member for Norfolk for bringing this matter to my attention and state that I am now aware there is such a rumour and that the rumour is unfounded. In fact, the district health councils are local planning bodies; they generally have good relationships with the hospitals and are responsible for regional planning advice to the minister.

**Mr. Miller:** Can the minister please tell us how this applies specifically to the Norfolk General Hospital board and the Haldimand-Norfolk District Health Council?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** As the member knows, I visited Haldimand-Norfolk over the summer and met with the district health council members as well as many of the trustees and leaders of the health care community in that region. As I said, the district health council helps to set regional planning priorities and advises the minister of proposals and suggestions from the local hospitals. It is the responsibility of the hospital board members, who are volunteers in the community, to run the hospital. They have responsibility under the Public Hospitals Act for those responsibilities, and I know that they are undertaken with a sense of responsibility and accountability for the resources which are allocated to them.

I enjoyed my meeting when I was in Haldimand-Norfolk and believe that the members of the district health council play a very important role in receiving proposals from all of the hospitals and health care providers in the community and then recommending priorities to the minister. I seek their advice and their recommendations.

#### COURT SYSTEM

**Mr. Hampton:** My question is for the Attorney General. The Attorney General will know that recently a provincial court judge became so frustrated with the backlog of court cases in the Brampton area that he publicly criticized the Ministry of the Attorney General and said that the overloading of the court system



cheats citizens of proper justice and makes judges embarrassed at being judges. Does the Attorney General feel that the provincial court system is functioning adequately and that the citizens of the province are receiving proper justice?

**Hon. Mr. Scott:** There is no doubt that in six or seven judicial districts in Ontario, principally the ones that surround Metropolitan Toronto, there has been extraordinary population growth over the last four or five years. This has put stress on the system, and I have no doubt that was the stress that the learned judge was referring to.

**Mr. Hampton:** I think we heard that same answer to a question last spring, that the problem exists only around Toronto, but I want to tell the Attorney General that we in northern Ontario have cases that seem to take for ever to get on the court list in the provincial court.

The judge in question refers to Barrie and says that the system has completely broken down in Barrie to the point where judges have stopped assigning trial dates and are just rolling people over in assignment court every two months.

I ask the Attorney General again—I do not think it is just a local Toronto problem; it is more widespread than that—does he think that people are getting proper justice?

**Hon. Mr. Scott:** The honourable member misunderstood the answer. When I said it was a suburban problem, what I meant to convey by that is that in the areas adjacent to Metropolitan Toronto, which include Barrie, the county of Simcoe, the judicial district of Durham and the county of Peel, there have been extraordinary population increases which have made the list problem very severe.

In other parts of Ontario, particularly northern Ontario, there is not a significant shortage in terms of services. If there is a difficulty getting trials listed, that may be the fault of the bar or other circumstances, but by and large in the northern districts and in eastern Ontario the lists are in reasonably good shape for in-custody cases and in pretty good shape for out-of-custody criminal cases.

1450

#### TRAINING FOR FIREFIGHTERS

**Mr. Villeneuve:** The Minister of Skills Development will recall that last week I made a very detailed presentation on behalf of the Mutual Aid Firemen's Association of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry regarding the funding of a course to update our part-time firemen. Could the minister update myself, as representative of the Stormont,

Dundas and Glengarry Mutual Aid Fire Department, as to his intentions with respect to funding this very good training program?

**Hon. Mr. Curling:** The honourable member brought this to my attention and I met with members of the mutual aid fire department in the office of my colleague. I brought it to their attention, as a matter of fact, that they come under the Solicitor General (Mrs. Smith). Both the Solicitor General and myself are working out the most appropriate way in which they can get funding in order to be trained. These are part-time firefighters. As I brought to the member's attention, as soon as we work out the appropriate scheme in which they can be properly trained, the member will hear from us.

#### PETITIONS

##### TAX INCREASES

**Mr. Cousens:** I am pleased to table a petition to the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, signed by approximately 100 residents, objecting to tax increases imposed by the Peterson government.

I have another petition, again signed by approximately 100 people from across Ontario, to the Lieutenant Governor in Council and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario objecting to the tax increases imposed by the Peterson government.

##### TEACHERS' SUPERANNUATION FUND

**Mr. Beer:** I have a petition from a number of members of the Superannuated Teachers of Ontario. Some 123 have signed this petition.

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"To amend the Teachers' Superannuation Act, 1983, in order that all teachers who retired prior to May 31, 1982, have their pensions recalculated on the best five years rather than at the present seven or 10 years.

"This proposed amendment would make the five-year criteria applicable to all retired teachers and would eliminate the present inequitable treatment."

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. There are many private conversations. They may be necessary, but they are very noisy.

##### CHILD CARE

**Ms. Poole:** I have a petition signed by over 50 residents of Eglinton riding and I have also appended my signature.

"To the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"Whereas quality, accessible day care is essential to the wellbeing of our children and their emotional and educational development; and

"Whereas day care is currently offered in many of our schools on a space availability basis; and

"Whereas enrolment is increasing in many schools with no corresponding increase in capital funding; and

"Whereas the day care services currently provided at Allenby public school in Toronto may be withdrawn because of space limitations;

"We hereby urge the government of Ontario to:

"1. Recognize that day care must receive the same priority as accorded to general education; and

"2. Expand on its current program of providing day care facilities in new schools in order to include existing schools; and

"3. Take measures to ensure that the day care services provided at Allenby public school continue to be provided in future, either in the school or in the immediate community."

#### EXTENDED CARE

**Mr. Adams:** I have a petition from a number of people in the Peterborough area concerning extended care facilities.

"We believe that all residents of extended care facilities, whether it be a nursing home or a municipal home for the aged, are entitled to equal care and services, according to the specific care requirements of each individual."

"Nursing home residents should benefit from the same amount of funding and kinds of services as residents of municipal homes for the aged.

"We urge the Ontario government to reform the extended care system so that it is uniform, fair and equitable with regard to funding and regulation and so that seniors in all extended care facilities receive the quality of care that they deserve.

"We support Mary Snelgrove, Ena Symons and the Ontario Nursing Home Association in their legal challenge and their efforts to gain fair and equal treatment for nursing home residents."

#### TAX INCREASES

**Mr. J. M. Johnson:** I am pleased to table a petition to the Honourable the Lieutenant Gover-

nor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario signed by approximately 100 residents of Ontario objecting to the tax increases imposed by the Peterson government.

I have signed this petition.

#### PENSION PLAN CONTRIBUTIONS

**Mrs. Cunningham:** I have a petition to the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario endorsed by 345 persons from London concerning the proposed two per cent increase to their pension contribution. I have added my signature to this and the date and I would like to quote:

"As employees, we have never had say in either our contribution or benefit levels. We are not permitted to have input into investment of our money which makes up a \$4-billion fund."

I would like to present this petition, duly signed, to the House, Mr. Speaker, and to yourself.

#### TAX INCREASES

**Mrs. Cunningham:** I have another petition. I am pleased to take this petition to the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, signed by approximately 100 residents of Ontario, objecting to the tax increases imposed by the Peterson government.

I have two like petitions which I will present at this time.

**Mr. Villeneuve:** I too have two petitions which I endorse and have signed.

I am pleased to table a petition to the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. It is signed by approximately 100 residents of Ontario objecting strongly to the tax increases imposed by the Peterson government in 1988.

The second petition is a similar one to the first one.

I am pleased to table a petition to the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. It is signed by approximately 100 residents of Ontario objecting strongly to the tax increases imposed by the Peterson government in 1988.

#### INTRODUCTION OF BILL

#### WORKERS' COMPENSATION AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. B. Rae moved first reading of Bill 195, An Act to amend the Workers' Compensation Act.

Motion agreed to.



**Mr. B. Rae:** Quite simply, this private member's bill deletes section 86n of the Workers' Compensation Act. It makes it clear that the Workers' Compensation Appeals Tribunal is, in fact, the tribunal of last resort when it comes to appeals and that the Workers' Compensation Board cannot use its bureaucratic power to overrule the appeal function of the Workers' Compensation Appeals Tribunal.

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## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### TOBACCO TAX AMENDMENT ACT

#### LOI MODIFIANT LA LOI DE LA TAXE SUR LE TABAC

Hon. Mr. Grandmaître moved second reading of Bill 120, An Act to amend the Tobacco Tax Act.

**Mr. Speaker:** Does the minister have any opening comment?

**Hon. Mr. Grandmaître:** I do. Bill 120, An Act to amend the Tobacco Tax Act, received first reading on April 25, 1988, and is designed to implement the Treasurer's budget of April 20, 1988, raising the tax on cigarettes and on cut tobacco.

La première lecture du projet de loi qui vise la modification de la Loi de la taxe sur le tabac a eu lieu le 25 avril 1988. Ce projet de loi prévoit la mise en application de la majoration de la taxe sur les cigarettes et le tabac coupé, annoncée par le Trésorier (M. Nixon) lors de la présentation du budget le 20 avril dernier.

The new rate of tax on cigarettes is 3.83 cents per cigarette, which represents an increase of one cent on the old rate of 2.83 cents per cigarette. The new rate of tax on cut tobacco is 2.2 cents per gram, which represents an increase of 0.6 cents on the old tax rate of 1.6 cents per gram. The increases became effective at 12:01 a.m., April 21, 1988.

I will also be proposing a further amendment to this bill that will permit the Lieutenant Governor in Council to make regulations to define any term used in the Tobacco Tax Act and to establish a system of marking tobacco products to improve compliance.

Copies of the proposed amendments have been distributed to honourable members.

**Ms. Bryden:** As the minister has said, Bill 120, the Tobacco Tax Amendment Act, is part of the budget tax bills which whacked the residents of this province with \$1.3 billion of extra taxes. This came after a pre-election sunshine budget of no taxes, which makes us wonder about the fiscal

responsibility or irresponsibility of the Treasurer (Mr. R. F. Nixon).

Strange to say, perhaps, this is one tax which our party does not oppose. Some people call it one of the sin taxes. To put it in a better light, it is one of the taxes which we hope will not only discourage smoking but will provide funds for helping people who wish to stop smoking, will provide funds for educating people about the dangers of smoking, both firsthand and second-hand, and will provide funds which may help those who are in tobacco farming to switch to other crops and other occupations.

We need a great deal of extra money for that. What this tax yields will not be nearly enough for that kind of adjustment program for tobacco farmers and for people in the production of cigarettes and other kinds of tobacco. They also will need assistance if this tax has the effect of reducing smoking.

The purpose of the bill is to raise the excise tax on cigarettes by one cent per cigarette from 2.83 cents to 3.83 cents and by 0.6 cents for each gram of cut tobacco. On a full-year basis, this will raise an additional \$172 million. This is consistent with what our party has been calling for in our prebudget material over the last couple of years because Ontario, even with the tax increase, will still be firmly in the middle with respect to the level of tobacco tax that is imposed across the country. Prebudget presentations have indicated this is one area where the Ontario government should not only stay in the middle, but should perhaps lead the way in taxing tobacco.

This does not mean we do not sympathize with those who find great difficulty in stopping smoking or those who work in workplaces where there is secondhand smoke and there is no protection from it. We hope the ministerial statements of last week about providing smoke-free workplaces in the province by next spring will really be implemented, because the provincial government's implementation of its own internal smoke-free workplace for workers is abysmally foot-dragging and inadequate.

In our own caucus, we have asked for a room to be provided for the smokers that would be vented and separate from the rest of the offices. Certainly in the north wing we have no such room and I do not think steps have been taken in the main building either. It is simply being rhetorical for the government to say it is going to have smoke-free workplaces in Ontario by next spring if it does not provide adequate facilities for those who still smoke, and protection for employees who do not wish to have lunch-rooms full of

smokers; or other offices with no place to smoke with employees having to go outside, take longer breaks and that sort of thing.

One interesting thing about this bill, and I hope the minister will look at it, is that while it puts an extra tax on cigarettes and on cut tobacco, it studiously avoids any extra tax on cigars. I think we have advocated for the past several years that cigars should also have increased taxes, but neither the previous Progressive Conservative government nor the present Liberal government has seen fit to increase the tax on cigars. I will be interested to know if the third party is prepared to recommend that this year.

Is there a symbolic implication, that cigars are exempted because they are smoked by big business, and is this a big business government that does not want to touch the cigar smokers? This is something I think should be investigated.

We have to admit this is a regressive tax and this party is opposed to the switch to regressive commodity taxes which the provincial Treasurer seems to be leaning more and more towards. His \$1-billion increase in the sales tax of course is the prime example of a switch to commodity taxes or more reliance on commodity taxes. The gasoline tax increase is also an additional tax that is regressive and will not hit according to ability to pay. In fact, the gasoline tax will depend on who drives the most miles, and whether it is part of your job or whether the goods that are delivered to you have added costs because of added gasoline tax.

In the case of the Tobacco Tax Amendment Act, I think we have to consider that this is a very regressive tax for those low-income, older people who have been addicted for years. They are the ones who really will suffer from it and they are the ones who should have some assistance in order to relieve the burden on them, because many of them have not been able to succeed in dropping the habit. Perhaps there should be a special relief tax credit for older people of low income who will really suffer from this tobacco tax increase. Of people over 60, probably 50 per cent are on pensions or below the poverty line and they really deserve some special treatment.

1510

We also want some of the proceeds to be used for education in the schools and education in sports centres so that we halt the early addiction of children. That is one area where this government has not done nearly enough. It has not paid enough to the schools in the way of teaching aids and information sessions for young

children so they will be aware of what an addicting product cigarettes are, and that starting very early makes it very difficult to stop much later.

The other thing I think the minister should give us an answer to is the statement in the Provincial Auditor's report last week that indicated there was cigarette smuggling going on and that the province was losing millions of dollars in revenue from the evasion of both tobacco and fuel taxes. We would like to know what the minister is doing to investigate these situations the auditor has pointed out, to see how much of this lost revenue can be recovered and how these illegal activities can be stopped.

Not only are we losing as taxpayers, but we are losing the battle against cigarette addiction by allowing this kind of smuggling of the product, it then being marketed through illegal channels that do not care whether the person who buys it becomes addicted. That is an area where I would like the minister to reply before we go further.

I am also still concerned about what he and his colleagues will report to us they will do with the additional \$167 million with regard to the tobacco farmers and what additional assistance will be available to them. I think they are the greatest losers from an economic point of view in this industry and they certainly need all the assistance this government can give them. We hope a program will be brought forth in this session. Now that we are increasing the tobacco tax, we hope a program will be brought forth as to how the minister intends to spend the additional \$172 million.

Our party will be supporting this bill. As I say, it is one of the few tax bills we support. Most of them do not seem to be going in the direction of a fairer tax system, but we support it for health reasons and for reasons of providing funds for educating people, and if possible, ending tobacco addiction.

**Mr. Sterling:** It is with a great deal of pleasure that I see and indicate the support of our party for this particular Tobacco Tax Amendment Act. It is the first time in a long time that this government has attempted to keep up with the rest of Canada with regard to taxation. I guess it is one of the few taxes I have said was too low in the past.

Tobacco taxation is part of a comprehensive policy needed by this government to assist in fighting addiction to tobacco. We have had in the past the Minister of Health (Mrs. Caplan) say that this government believes in preventive health care, yet we have had in the past a government



unwilling to act with regard to bringing up the level of taxation to an adequate level in order to keep the consumption of tobacco down to a reasonable level.

I want to talk about a number of matters with regard to this particular act. The first I would like to deal with is the matter of the taxation of tobacco over the past three or four years in Ontario. What we have seen in the past four or five years is that tobacco products in Ontario in April 1984 were the second highest in all of Canada. Prior to this tax increase, we became the second lowest taxpayer of tobacco.

I am not out to hit cigarette users or people unjustly in terms of the amount of tax they pay on any particular product, but the fact of the matter is that there is a very good argument that the level of taxation has a very direct effect on the consumption of tobacco in Ontario. Over the past three or four years, because this government has failed to keep the tobacco tax up with the rate of inflation, there has been an increasing number of smokers taking up the habit in this province.

It is also interesting to note, according to a Rothmans of Pall Mall Ltd. report, that if we go back in time to the 1960s, 67 per cent of the product cost at that time was tax. Prior to this government coming forward with this tax increase, the amount of tax per cigarette had dropped to 62 per cent. In very real terms, this government had cut back on the amount of taxation it was taxing people in this province.

**Mr. Faubert:** We are supposed to be the good guys for that.

**Mr. Sterling:** Well, in some ways I would agree that lower taxes are nice. But if you read the reports of various researchers who have looked into this matter, they will indicate to you that if you keep your taxation low and the price of tobacco products low, you will encourage young people to start smoking.

I am going to refer, first, to recommendation 4 of a report for the Ontario Council of Health, dated 1982. It says, "It is recommended that the government of Ontario take action to ensure that the retail price of cigarettes be doubled within a 12-month period by means of three-phased increases in taxation."

They indicate their reasoning for that. The first reasoning they put down is: "It probably is the most direct and reliable way to reduce the overall amount of smoking in the province. Its rapid and substantial effect should make a marked contribution to social climate and facilitate other recommendations." They also say, "The measure would be productive of additional govern-

ment revenue which could be used to finance other components in an overall smoking program."

I want to refer to that a little later, to what some of this funding is being used for and how little of this \$150 million to \$170 million is actually being plowed back to prevent people from taking up the habit of tobacco, and also to try to compensate people who are getting out of the process of supplying that tobacco.

## 1520

Another reason they talk about, and this is the most important one, is that the impact would be especially strong on young people who have less disposable income and whose smoking is a particular problem for society. Very recent scientific evidence underscores the great significance of this measure for smoking prevention.

In other words, they are saying that as you increase the level of taxation and the cost of tobacco, it is young people who will quit faster than anybody else and who will be more affected by the increase in the tobacco tax. I think that is something we should encourage. I know all members of this House do not agree with that, particularly the four members of the government side who represent the tobacco area.

With regard to the tie between the rate of taxation of tobacco and the consumption of tobacco, I would like to refer to a study by Dr. Kenneth Warner who is with the department of health planning and administration at the University of Michigan. He says in a documented study that the pattern of price responsiveness varies with age. He says, first, "Teenagers and young adults have smoking habits that are less well defined and of shorter duration," which implies less of an addiction to tobacco when people are young.

"The potential for responsiveness to price is much greater," so the younger you are, the more likely your habits are to change as the price of tobacco goes up. "Younger people may be more inclined to start smoking as a result of a price decrease," which has happened over the past three years in Ontario because the government has not kept the rate of taxation up with the rate of inflation. "On average, younger people will have less disposable income so that the price response may include more of an income effect."

Dr. Warner, who has studied this matter, says that as we increase the price of tobacco, the likelihood of older people leaving or quitting smoking is not that great, but some of our younger people, those who are starting to smoke, will be discouraged from taking up the habit.

He also says in this report of the study: "Very few people begin to smoke after the age of 21 years. Hence, cigarette price decreases might be unlikely to induce adults to start smoking, while price increases could encourage some smokers to quit. The implication is that price response might be considerably greater in the instance of price increases than decreases."

In his conclusions with regard to this particular article he has written: "In the long run, the toll of smoking is tied to the smoking practices of the youngest generation. There is widespread consensus that the ultimate conquest of smoking-induced illness can come only from preventing the onset of smoking in the teenage and early years.

"In this regard, the findings of this study are particularly important. Not only do the price responses represent large numbers of young persons, they also represent substantial proportions. An eight-cent decrease in the federal excise tax"—he is talking about a decrease in American excise tax—"would increase the ranks of teenaged smokers by about 10 per cent, assuming the decrease was fully passed on to the consumers." Therefore, for every per cent of increase or decrease in the rate of cost of tobacco, the consumption by young people either decreased or went up by that amount.

The results of the fact that this government has not kept up with inflation were reflected in the statistics, I believe for 1986, which indicated that while smoking has decreased in all other provincial jurisdictions across Canada, it either stayed the same or increased in Ontario.

That could be attributed partially to the affluence of the people of Ontario, in terms of the economy being relatively good at this time, or it could be as a result of us underpricing our tobacco products in relation to the disposable income that our people have at this time.

I mentioned before that we in Ontario, at the time this government took power, were the second-highest taxers of tobacco. Prior to this tax being implemented we were the second-lowest. With this particular tax increase we come about in the middle of the pack, either fifth or sixth in that range. I might add that most of the provinces that are higher than that are ones with smaller populations.

**Hon. Mr. Grandmaître:** And do not add the retail sales tax.

**Mr. Sterling:** No, my figures take into account, I might add for the Minister of Revenue, the total taxes after adding in the retail sales tax.

**Hon. Mr. Grandmaître:** Our tax does not include the retail sales tax.

**Mr. Sterling:** I am quite aware of that. So the minister will have the correct figures, I will say that on a carton of 200 cigarettes the prices I have been given show that the total tobacco taxes are \$17.23 in Ontario. This includes a tobacco tax of \$7.66, a sales tax of \$1.92—

**Hon. Mr. Grandmaître:** All told, \$9.45.

**Mr. Sterling:** I have \$9.58, so we are close.

In relation to that, the province has now brought itself into line with the mainstream of Canada. I hope that over the next year or two, or even this year, we will see a drop in consumption of tobacco because we have brought those figures up to a reasonable level.

Why has my party in particular led this fight against the use of tobacco, trying to constrain the use of tobacco? Every 43 minutes in Ontario someone dies prematurely by seven to seven and a half years because of the addiction to tobacco. That is every 43 minutes, so from the time I started speaking to the time I end, someone in this province will pass away because of his or her use of tobacco. That is how lethal this product is.

I want to quote from the World Health Organization. We have been a long time coming around to realizing what the World Health Organization has said and that we should take some action on it. It said in 1975, "Smoking-related diseases are such important causes of disability and premature death in developed countries that the control of cigarette smoking could do more to improve health and prolong life in these countries than any other single action in the whole field of preventive medicine."

**1530**

The Minister of Health has stated that she is interested in preventive medicine, but it has only been after some pushing and cajoling that the government has now seen fit to take some action with regard to taxation, with regard to controlling smoking in the workplace and in public places.

I do want to congratulate the Minister of Correctional Services (Mr. Ramsay). I see him sitting in the House. I understand in his institutions he has now taken some policies with regard to young offenders and the use of tobacco. I wanted to congratulate him here—he is standing up and taking a bow—because in doing this, the minister has given a lot of young people who are caught up in our young offenders' institutions a degree of comfort in terms of trying to stay away from tobacco. Unfortunately, in the past, many of our young people became addicted to tobacco



while they were in our institutions. I wanted to congratulate the minister on taking that step. I do not always say only negative things about the government, as you know, Mr. Speaker.

The one thing I did want to say in a negative context about the government is what this government is doing with the money it is getting from this particular tobacco tax. The member for Norfolk (Mr. Miller) might be well aware of this, as I am sure he is involved with the Redux program, which deals with trying to compensate tobacco producers if they opt out of producing tobacco. I believe some tobacco producers have already taken some steps to exit from producing tobacco.

I was much chagrined at the fact that this government has not held up its end of the bargain with regard to the Redux program. In fact, what has happened is that we had a great announcement, going back to May 1987, dealing with the reduction of tobacco producers and compensating them for it. Both the federal and provincial governments agreed to put forward \$30 million each. Now the Minister of Agriculture and Food (Mr. Riddell) is saying he is not going to come up with his \$30 million.

I read most recently an article in the *Delhi News-Record*, which is down in the tobacco belt. It said:

"The provincial government will not match relief money. The Ontario Minister of Agriculture and Food has turned thumbs down on matching the additional \$30 million in Redux funding announced by the federal government in mid-October. At a meeting with the tobacco board directors on Monday, Mr. Riddell made it very clear he would watch the federal Redux program for the next four years before committing any Ontario funding for this purpose. He expressed his concern about too many producers leaving the business and said he wants a viable tobacco industry. Mr. Riddell did say he would go to cabinet to seek more funding for transition, alternative crops, research and retroactivity."

I find it a little two-faced here that the government is coming in with a significant increase in tobacco taxes, some \$150 million to \$170 million, yet is unwilling to help out the producers in the riding of the member for Norfolk, who see the writing on the wall with regard to the use of tobacco. I feel very strongly that this government is being two-faced in terms of asking for a greater amount of tax with regard to this product but not helping out the people who are going to be affected by the fact that—I hope—more people will abandon tobacco in the

future and that young people will not get hooked on it in the future.

There are many other points that I could raise about this government's overall policy with regard to tobacco. As I said at the outset of my remarks, tobacco tax is part of an overall policy which should be developed on the use of tobacco: tobacco taxation, as I have mentioned before, the reduction of the number of tobacco producers who are producing tax, and this government putting its fair share of money into the pot to help those people out. I think they should be doing more to help out not only the primary producers of tobacco, but also those people who work in the factories which produce the cut tobacco products. This government has done nothing in that regard.

We recently have heard that the government would, in its own civil service, be assisting provincial civil servants to the tune of about \$100 each, to help them try to break the tobacco habit. I would like to see this government take a more active role in assisting not only people in the provincial civil service to get away from the addiction of tobacco, but also individuals in the private workplace.

I would be remiss if I did not also congratulate the Minister of Labour (Mr. Sorbara), who is not here, on bringing forward a piece of legislation last week to control smoking in the workplace. I have read that piece of legislation over and have many concerns about how practical it is and whether it can be enforced and will provide protection for nonsmokers in the workplace.

I was privileged to debate briefly with the minister last week and put forward the scenario within that piece of legislation that would still allow a situation whereby a nonsmoker would be forced to sit side by side with a smoker.

I look forward to having the government bring that bill forward so that we can then put it out to a committee, in order to ensure that there will be proper amendments to that piece of legislation, that nonsmokers' rights will really be protected in the workplace. Unfortunately, while I believe that the piece of legislation that the government has brought forward is well intentioned, I do not believe that it reaches its goal. I am quite willing to work in a positive and constructive way to reach that conclusion.

I can only say, in concluding my remarks, that we in this party support this increase in the level of taxation of tobacco products. However, we do not believe that this government is utilizing that money to help tobacco producers who are going to be put out of business if in fact the rate of

consumption of tobacco goes down as a result of this tax increase. I want each and every tobacco producer in Ontario to know that the federal government is now doing more than twice what Ontario is doing in this regard. In fact, the Minister of Agriculture and Food does not seem to want to do very much at all to deal with this particular issue.

1540

I wish the Minister of Health was here, because while the Addiction Research Foundation deals extensively with the problems of addiction to alcohol and to drugs, it is doing far too little with regard to the addiction to tobacco. I believe that, in terms of research staff, there are 10 researchers dealing with alcohol addiction to one dealing with tobacco addiction. When we compare these two addictions and consider the carnage, the loss of health and the loss of life caused by the addiction to tobacco is at least equal to that caused by the addiction to alcohol, if not greater.

The other area the member for Beaches-Woodbine (Ms. Bryden) was talking about was public education. The only thing that we have seen from this government in the past has been a decrease in the number of dollars it has put forward to tell our young people the facts and figures about the use of tobacco and to say that once they start tobacco, they may not be able to quit in the future.

We look at tobacco taxation as part of one of the comprehensive policies which our party would put forward if we were ever to govern in the immediate future. One particular part of our policy would be to encourage tobacco producers to get out of the business. We would pay them fairly, compensate them fairly to get out of the business. We would help them retrain. We would also like to help the communities that are affected by the fact that the tobacco product may not be part of their economy any more. We would like to help retrain those workers who convert the tobacco products into their end use.

We would like to help people in the private sector kick their addiction to tobacco. We would consider policies, like a reduced Ontario health insurance plan premium, for people who do not smoke. We would consider other kinds of policies to encourage in some way a reduction of the use of tobacco by all our Ontario residents.

As I said before, every 43 minutes someone in our province dies prematurely by seven to seven and a half years because of tobacco-related illness. That adds up to 35 or 40 a day, 12,000 a year. Unfortunately, once individuals get hooked

on tobacco, it is almost impossible for a good number to quit.

We would look at a reasonable policy with regard to tobacco tax and we support this increase in tobacco tax, but we would ask the government to reconsider other prongs of its health care policy and give more of this \$150 million to \$170 million to fighting the results of increasing tobacco tax in the province.

**Mr. Miller:** As the member for Norfolk, I want to take a couple of moments to express my concerns about the tax that has been proposed and about some of the comments that have been made by members in the Legislature, particularly the one who has been on a crusade against smoking for many years now within the province, the member for Carleton (Mr. Sterling), and also the member for Beaches-Woodbine who commented earlier that this is a sin tax.

I would not disagree with the statements which have been made and I am not one to stand up to promote a product which is going to be detrimental to the health of our young people or the people of our province, but I would like to make a few points that concern me.

The first is that the higher you put the tax on tobacco, the more pressure you are putting on, going in different directions, the use of a habit-forming product. It can vary from drinking to drugs to smoking pot and so many other things that go on.

First, I would like to indicate that I never smoked until I was 30, as a matter of fact, because when we went to school, smoking was not permitted in the school. The only ones who did smoke used the church shed and they often rolled their own tobacco at that time, because money was very scarce and very hard to come by and the principal smokers were using roll-your-own tobacco rather than tailor made. Only the well-to-do people could afford that luxury of using tailor-made cigarettes.

I did not smoke because I wanted to protect my health. I enjoyed sports and I wanted to participate to the fullest of my ability. Consequently, we looked up to our athletes of the day like Syl Apps, Howie Meeker and those who played hockey when the Maple Leafs had an excellent hockey team. As I recall, Bee Hive corn syrup was the main energy producer for those hockey players and was the main sponsor. How times have changed.

To project my personal life a little further, we played ball and hockey until we were 35 or close to 40 years old, and supported our hockey team by coaching and lending our talents in those



directions. We always promoted strong bodies and taking care of yourself.

I can recall also, as we used to go for a drive on a Sunday afternoon, my father would have a cigar. He would light it up, and that smoke always kept a memory of my father. He passed away when I was 21 years old, but I always enjoyed that trip because I loved the smell of that tobacco smoke.

When we went to school, the old steam trains used to go through Jarvis, and the smoke from those trains was another era we have gone through. It was always a highlight that we could stand and watch that train go by and have that whiff of smoke.

Again, I do not recall it, but I have heard my mother and dad say that my grandparents always smoked a clay pipe. Consequently, I was not led in either direction, whether I should smoke or not smoke, but as I got older I have taken up smoking the odd cigar. I have taken up smoking my pipe.

As I said, when I go to visit my mother who is in the nursing home at Simcoe, there are some older folks there sitting by the door smoking on their pipes. I am not sure what else they might do to get a little satisfaction and contentment, and I think it is relaxing to see them do that. When we are talking about wiping out the use of tobacco totally, I do not think that is going to be possible.

Only this last summer, within the Ontario Tobacco Museum in Delhi, in the township of Delhi in my region of Haldimand-Norfolk, they unveiled a bronze plaque of the tobacco plant. It was unveiled by a member of the Six Nations Indian reservation. He gave the history of tobacco as it relates to North America, indicating that it has always been grown here and that it was a way that those native Canadians or Indians communicated with their Maker. There is merit to that if we get some satisfaction.

He did make the comment that when the white man came to Canada, he did not know how to handle it. They would be the first ones to admit that anything used in excess can be hazardous to your health, and chain-smoking is hazardous, no doubt about it. Making our young people aware of the hazards can be applied, again, in many areas. We do make them aware of that and we do set good examples for our young people, and we do not permit them to smoke in our schools.

1550

Another thing: If we do not permit them, even in this Legislature, and my colleagues indicate that it is a hazard to them, they do not like it, it is going to be detrimental, I respect that. I think it is respect that I want to promote.

A quote from the Globe and Mail of Tuesday, October 11, 1988, indicates my concern about roll-your-own cigarettes. "As the tax goes up, we will see more use of roll-your-own tobacco. You do not have the protection with those that you have with a filter on tailor-made cigarettes.

As I recall, when I go back to those growing-up days in the 1930s and 1940s, roll-your-own was the main tobacco smoked. Vogue cigarette papers and a package of Daily Mail for 25 cents could provide you with smokes for a week.

In the Globe dated Tuesday, October 11, it indicates that: "A decade ago, roll-your-own cigarettes were associated with cowboys and fishermen and were understandably an insignificant part of the market. But sales of fine-cut tobacco for rolling has doubled in the past 10 years and they now account for 15 per cent of the total sales."

I think that is an indication, without having to go through a lot of research, that tobacco is going to be used in one form or another, and if people are going to roll their own, the government is going to lose taxation money which has been a great contributor to the overall revenue of the province, particularly over the last 15 or 20 years.

The member for Carleton indicated that his government was responsible for putting that heavy tax on. I recall it well, but I think by overextending the tax, in the long run we will lose income and drive people to go in other directions in utilizing tobacco, no matter what.

I do not think the tax increase is unacceptable according to inflation. I would just like to make that point to the minister as he considers increasing the taxes in the future.

I suppose the other argument I would like to put is that we are encouraging smuggling, moving tobacco from one province to another if the tax is not in relationship across Canada. Being close to the American border, of course, we have to contend with competing there also.

I think those two arguments should be considered in dealing with any increase in the future.

To get back to comments by the member for Carleton on what we have done for the tobacco farmers, particularly in Ontario, which we represent and which produces 90 per cent of all Canada's tobacco, we have been supportive, along with our federal friends, in supporting the Redux program and trying to assist those farmers who have been caught in a difficult financial position. We have contributed \$21 million, along

with our federal friends, to assist up to 500 farmers in retiring from the industry and taking 3,200 acres of tobacco out of production.

We do have a tobacco advisory committee established at the present time within the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, again made up of our federal representatives, our tobacco growers and the manufacturing sector, to come up with a long-term plan to ease out those growers if the market continues to decline. I would like to make a point very clearly to the member for Carleton, that tobacco sales and growth last year was at about 110 million pounds. This year we have markets for 145 million pounds, which is an increase.

If we are going to have tobacco on the shelves in Ontario and in Canada, would he want that tobacco to be imported or would he like to see our farmers growing it here in Ontario? From my point of view, and as the representative of my area, I want to make sure that if it is going to be a legal product and if it is going to be utilized, I think that our farmers should be permitted to supply that demand.

With those comments, I would like to close with a warning to the Minister of Revenue (Mr. Grandmaitre) that hopefully he can see fit to keep a realistic figure on tax increases, particularly when it comes to tobacco.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. M. C. Ray):** Are there any questions or comments? Would the member for Windsor-Riverside (Mr. D. S. Cooke) like to ask some questions or make some comments? Are there any other participants in the debate? Would the minister or the parliamentary assistant like to wrap up the debate?

**Hon. Mr. Grandmaitre:** With regard to the tax on cigarettes and cut tobacco, I think there is a general consensus in this House that the increases are warranted and that the size of the increases is appropriate at this time.

Avec un produit de consommation comme la cigarette où la taxe constitue une grande partie du prix de vente, les profits réalisés par ceux qui arrivent à se soustraire au paiement de la taxe sont considérables.

Protecting the integrity of the tobacco tax base has become a matter of increasing concern. The amendments with respect to marking will be made to this bill in committee and will give us the ability to improve tobacco tax compliance.

If I may, I would like to address some of the concerns that some members have brought to my attention concerning Bill 120. The member for Beaches-Woodbine has asked me a point-blank question. What will the government provide us with or what will they do with the additional \$150

million? I would like to remind her that the government has used in the past and will continue to use these tax dollars to improve programs, such as health programs, environment programs and other health programs. These tax dollars have always been used to improve programs.

Her second question was, "What will you do about the tobacco growers in this province who will go bankrupt or whatever?" What have we done in the past to assist them? I would like to remind her that this government and the federal government have worked out or are working out a three year program consisting of \$30 million for the next three years to assist tobacco growers to adjust themselves to raising other crops.

I think we have responded and we will continue to respond to the tobacco growers of this province. I know that they are dearly affected by any tax increase, as the member for Norfolk pointed out so correctly. We are thinking about these tobacco growers.

There was another question from the member for Beaches-Woodbine about cigars. Cigars are taxed at 45 per cent of the retail price. This is a higher tax than the 3.83 cents per cigarette tax.

**Ms. Bryden:** There has been no increase for a long time. Isn't it time for an increase?

1600

**Hon. Mr. Grandmaitre:** No, no increase. It is 45 per cent and I just want to remind the member that it is higher than the 3.3 cents for cigarettes. Also, to respond to my colleague the member for Carleton: first of all, I think this honourable member must be congratulated for the fight that he has been putting up in this House and outside this House to combat addiction and smoking in the workplace.

I was very interested in his comments and remarks which he read from the report of some doctor, whose name escapes me at the present time. I do not want to argue with those facts. I think they are facts and I want to encourage him to keep up the fight. I think people have to be better informed about addiction to tobacco and I think that the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Labour at the present time are working hand in hand to combat addiction and to introduce better programs in order to diminish and eliminate tobacco use.

For the time being, I want to thank the participating members.

Motion agreed to.

Bill ordered for the standing committee on finance and economic affairs.



GASOLINE TAX AMENDMENT ACT  
LOI MODIFIANT LA LOI DE LA TAXE  
SUR L'ESSENCE

Hon. Mr. Grandmaître moved second reading of Bill 121, An Act to amend the Gasoline Tax Act.

**Hon. Mr. Grandmaître:** This bill, An Act to amend the Gasoline Tax Act, provides for an increase to the rate of tax on gasoline. The new rate of tax on gasoline is 9.3 cents per litre, which represents an increase of one cent over the old rate of 8.3 cents per litre.

La taxe sur l'essence passe de 8,3 cents à 9,3 cents le litre, soit une majoration d'un cent.

This bill also provides for an additional levy at a rate of three cents per litre on all purchases of leaded gasoline, making the effective tax rate for leaded gasoline at 12.3 cents per litre.

Ce projet de loi prévoit également une augmentation supplémentaire de trois cents le litre sur tout achat d'essence avec plomb, portant la taxe sur l'essence avec plomb à 12,3 cents le litre.

This increase became effective at 12:01 a.m., April 21, 1988.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Are there any questions and comments on the minister's statement? Do other members wish to participate in the debate?

**Ms. Bryden:** This amendment to the gasoline tax is a further departure by the provincial Treasurer (Mr. R. F. Nixon) and the government from a fair tax system in this province. The budget that the Treasurer brought in on April 20 contained an almost \$1-billion increase in sales tax, and then a further \$167 million in gasoline tax. It followed a pre-election, no-tax budget, which shows how much the government was trying to hoodwink the voters into thinking the Treasury was full and no tax increases were going to be imposed. Little did they realize what a big whack would be imposed when the first budget after the election came down. This bill, as the minister has said, raises the tax on a litre of gasoline by one cent. That is a regressive tax.

There is an additional charge of three cents on leaded gasoline. That is the only part of this bill I would support, because leaded gasoline has been proved to produce a great deal of pollution and should have been banned years ago by this government and by the federal government. This pollution is infecting all of us and is pollution we should not be exposed to. In fact, I would really recommend a higher tax on leaded gasoline so that there is no incentive to adjust your car so that you can continue to use it.

There should be a real disincentive built into the law about leaded gasoline. It really should be banned outright. I notice that at the gas pumps the full three-cent differential does not always show up, which means there is some lack of enforcement or definition in that extra three cents being collected so that the two prices are at least equalized. I think that is something the ministry should be looking into.

It seems the height of something or other for the minister to come to us asking for a one-cent-a-litre increase in the gasoline tax with the Provincial Auditor bringing out a report last week saying, "You're not collecting half of what you should be collecting from the gasoline tax," and that there are all sorts of schemes being operated to defraud the government of its collections from this tax. Apparently, it has been going on for years.

I think this highlights the lack of proper administrative procedures in the collection of this tax. It indicates another reason why the ministry should be bringing out an annual report, which I have been suggesting for a number of years, so that we could have statistics on collections and costs of collections and the kind of administration personnel being used in this field. The estimates would then give us a better opportunity to examine the practices of the ministry in collecting this tax.

Thank goodness we have an auditor who has some clout and some machinery for investigating these activities of the Ministry of Revenue. There should be much more information available, so that all of us would not be taken by surprise when the auditor suddenly discovers there are a whole lot of illegal activities going on. I am really shocked that the Ministry of Revenue did not seem to know very much about them, or if it did, they did not come out until the auditor reported them to us. I think there should be no increase in the gasoline tax until such time as they clean up their act on collecting it.

**1610**

The gasoline tax is one of the most regressive taxes in our system because not only is it not based on ability to pay, but it hits certain parts of the province much more heavily than other parts. The north in particular not only pays a higher gas tax because the distances are so great, but it also pays a higher gas tax because the cost of the fuel is higher. It has to come more of a distance up to the north. The northern people also pay extra costs on all their consumer goods which are trucked in or brought in by any form of motor

vehicle, because the cost of the gas is added to the price and then the markup is put on top of that.

There are good arguments for a lower gasoline tax in the north in order to equalize in some way the cost to the consumer of having to be serviced greatly by vehicle carriers and paying all this extra tax to the government.

The gasoline tax also discriminates against people in certain occupations. Anybody who needs to drive a car in connection with his work pays more for the operation of his business or for his occupation. Often the cost is not reimbursed by his employer. It is not based on ability to pay; it is based on the amount of travelling you have to do and the high cost of the fuel when you get it in different parts of the province.

We need an equalization of the cost of fuel and we need some compensation for the greater distances and greater costs of consumer products, particularly in areas where there are very few alternative means of transportation. That is another handicap the people in the north suffer from, and the people in some other parts of the province too. There are fewer bus services or transit services, so more and more people have to rely on gas-driven vehicles or some other fuel that is used in them that is equally taxed.

We wonder why the government felt it had to whack all of us with these huge tax increases in the first post-election budget when it actually had an increase in revenues, in the year before the budget came down, of nearly eight per cent. Certainly, that is way above the cost of inflation.

The government is overtaxing us, if we consider it should just keep up with the cost of inflation, in order to have more money to throw around in various ways, as it seems to be doing in grants to the IDEA Corp. and things of that sort. But it is cutting back on all the grants to self-help groups, Meals on Wheels, services to seniors and things of that sort. Instead of using some of its revenue for those things, it is using its revenue to take trips to Hong Kong or have the caucus move around the province frequently.

The people who really need the grants—self-help groups, service groups and groups that are trying to organize nonprofit housing—are the ones who are not getting any of this largess. What they are told is: “There is a freeze on government services and ministries. We have to keep our costs down.” So they keep them down at the expense of the poor and the underfunded groups that are trying to serve the people of this province who are being underserved in very many ways.

I include welfare recipients in that group. Apparently, they will have to wait until next

spring for any sort of increase, even though the province has all this money flowing in from the new sales tax. Those people are really hit very hard by the new sales tax, because to them it is a 14 per cent increase in most of their living costs since they do not have very much they can save and do not buy very much that are not taxable commodities.

We are going to vote against this bill, against the one-cent increase. We will support the three-cent-per-litre increase on leaded gasoline, but hope it will be enforced better so there will be no differential in the cost of leaded and unleaded gas. I hope we will move with regulations to outlaw the use of leaded gas as soon as possible. We are actually behind the United States in the elimination of leaded gas and emissions from motor vehicles.

We would have hoped that instead of this increase, the government would have moved further towards a fairer tax system. But we find that at the same time as this tax comes in, there is not a one-cent increase in the corporation tax and there is no minimum tax for corporations in this province, so literally thousands of corporations pay no tax at all because they are able to benefit from the loopholes in the tax system. Therefore, ours becomes less and less a fair tax system, the poor and the middle class pay a larger and larger percentage and those who drive cars are being asked for an even greater contribution than other people who do not have to drive cars as part of their work or as part of their living standards, as part of the commodities they must purchase.

I urge the minister to reconsider this bill, to withdraw it and instead to bring in a corporation tax that produces a fair share from the corporations, and to stop whacking the users of gasoline.

**Mr. Harris:** I want to say a few words. Unfortunately, it has been so long since this budget was introduced and this bill tabled in the House that one has to refresh one's memory once again at just how dastardly a move this tax was, along with the other ones. However, as I quickly reviewed it in preparation for some lengthy comments today, it did not take me long to—

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** Work yourself back into it.

**Mr. Harris:** That is right; to remember just what a dastardly move it was.

**Mr. Reycraft:** Remember the holiday spirit.

**Mr. Harris:** In the holiday spirit; thank you very much.

I mention that by way of preface because it really is, and I am taking every opportunity to say so as we debate these tax bills. I do not blame the



Minister of Revenue (Mr. Grandmaître) nor the Ministry of Revenue officials who are watching with bated breath, anxiously wondering what the member for Nipissing might say. I do not blame them because I know they would have much preferred to have had these tax bills debated in the spring, and to have had them completed in an orderly fashion in the way good, orderly governments used to do things around here.

I know it must be with much chagrin that they have to deal with a Premier (Mr. Peterson), a Treasurer and a House leader who all say: "Look, these tax bills are not very friendly things. In fact, we've just perpetrated the biggest tax grab in the history of the province on the people. Maybe if we kind of put them out of sight, they will be out of mind through a federal election. Perhaps the longer we can put them off, we can squeeze the opposition by bringing them on just before Christmas and it will not want to debate them too long. Perhaps they will be buried in the free trade stuff going on in the federal House and the federal election aftermath and what not."

**1620**

That is clearly the political agenda and strategy of this government. It is a very chicken strategy. It is not a fair strategy towards the people of this province. It is incumbent upon us to refresh the memory of the motoring public out there, as we do with the 14 per cent increase in sales tax, and of course the increase in tobacco taxes which we as a party are not actively opposing. We still have to wonder where the dollars are going. We would much prefer to see those dollars in some direct tie-in to fighting some of the negative effects of smoking and of tobacco usage.

The gas tax is 18 cents a gallon on leaded gasoline. We oppose this tax increase. We will be opposing this bill. On April 21, when we first got word of it, we indicated we were opposed to it. I think at that time the government was, and I guess still is, trying to portray this new tax as some form of environmental measure.

One of the advantages of doing this six, seven or eight months later is that we have not seen these new dollars that are coming into the Treasury being used to improve the environment in any way, shape or form. In fact, if a detailed analysis is done of the Ministry of the Environment estimates, quite the opposite is taking place.

At that time, I said if they—that means the dastardly ones—were serious they would lower the tax on unleaded gas to equalize prices. That was the name of the game, to provide equal prices for leaded and unleaded gasoline. The

government could just as easily have lowered the tax on unleaded gasoline, or as we also proposed, it could have brought in a revenue-neutral measure, something that might have been a compromise between the two. The government chose not to do that.

Therefore, we concluded at that time, and we have seen nothing to change our minds, that this increase in tax is nothing more than another tax grab. Everyone will feel the impact of this tax increase, but the people in northern Ontario will be hurt even more, particularly by the sales tax but by the gasoline tax as well, because there are more people in the north still using leaded gasoline. That presents a problem as well.

Let me talk about the across-the-board, one-cent increase in gas taxes for a moment. This is a repeat performance of what the Treasurer attempted to do in 1985. At that time, he tried to rip off Ontario drivers with a substantial increase in gas taxes. That was when he took off the ad valorem, by the way, and tried to sneak a little extra in there at the same time.

Again, I do not blame the Revenue officials. In fact, I congratulate them for coming up with the little sneaky schemes to rip more money out of us, because that is indeed their job. Their job is bring money in for the province. Undoubtedly, in their minds in 1985, and it was confirmed in their minds in 1985, 1986, 1987 and 1988, they saw a greedy, fast-spending government coming in and said: "Look, our job is to feed this out-of-control monster that wants to substantially spend more money. If we're going to do our job, we have to come up with every sneaky, underhanded measure we can to raise more money for our Treasurer and our Premier to spend."

That is their job and I do not blame them for doing it. I blame the philosophy of a Premier who sets that kind of direction and who says: "Yes, that's a good, sneaky idea. That will suck more money out of them. Let's go with that." Indeed, it is a civil servant's job to read the Premier, see what he is like and give him what he wants, and that is what they are doing.

As I understand it, what we have is a one-cent increase in all gasoline taxes across the board. What happened in 1985 when the Treasurer and the Minister of Revenue tried to do this was that there was a minority parliament, and when it was pointed out, particularly by my party—the New Democratic Party members at the time were very anxious to get rid of the ad valorem aspect of the tax and that might have clouded their immediate judgement, because I thought they were not as quick to respond at that time to the hidden

freezing, they were so ecstatic to see the removal of the ad valorem.

However, they quickly saw what was going on, as my party pointed out what was happening, and they joined with our party, as we are joining quite a bit these days on a number of issues, and we would not accept that. We would not accept that from the Treasurer, the Minister of Revenue or the Premier of the day.

Faced at that time with going to the people over a substantial increase in gasoline taxes, cognizant of the experience of Joe Clark when he tried to do something similar, the government backed down. They said: "No, we don't think we'll take this to the people. We think we will just back down and we will reduce that tax." At that time, it was a flat tax proposal of 8.8 cents a litre and I guess they ended up reducing it to 8.3 cents per litre.

At that time, members will recall, the Conservative opposition of the day proposed an amendment that would place a cap. It said: "Leave the ad valorem in, if it upsets you so much that prices go up. We propose to cap it at 16.6 per cent." So if gasoline prices went down, which they did, as members will recall, the motoring public and the consumers would benefit. We would have capped it at the 8.3 cents. We think this would have been much fairer to drivers. In fact, had that 16.6 per cent ad valorem cap been in place, I believe the Ontario drivers would have saved about \$450 million in 1986 and \$500 million in 1987 under the Conservative proposal.

The Canadian Automobile Association has estimated the new Liberal system of gas taxes increases this to about \$700 million for 1988 and the cost to individual drivers to approximately \$96 per year. That is the difference between what a Conservative government had in place and would think is fair for gasoline taxes and what a greedy, high-spending Liberal government wants to do with gasoline taxes.

That is just the one cent that we are talking about, so that would be the unleaded gasoline.

When it comes to leaded gasoline, of course, we are into this four-cent increase, which I point out is precisely 18 cents a gallon, the figure that Joe Clark has lived to regret. Indeed, I suggest political history has been substantially changed by a government which thought 18 cents a gallon and being up front with people in putting it out there would be acceptable. I do not think there is any doubt that that tax at that time did change the course of history.

1630

I suggest to those Liberal backbenchers who at this very moment are in a caucus office, eating some peanuts, watching me speak—I know they are there, because I was visiting them just a few moments ago. I did borrow some of the Liberal peanuts; in fact, they have been very generous with their peanuts. I want that on the record for those who are in there watching me at this moment.

I say that because there were a number of first-time members in there. I assume they are watching. They want to be cognizant of what can happen when a government hikes gasoline taxes 18 cents a gallon in one fell swoop. They may want to reflect back on this budget some time after 1991. At that time, they will probably have a million other reasons as to why they got walloped and lost power.

Over the next few years, as the members think of the government's silly free trade stand and the new stupid things it will do over the next few years and the mistakes it will make, I suggest members not forget to think back to the 18-cents-a-gallon tax as perhaps the turning point, that this budget is perhaps the turning point that led to their defeat in 1991.

They have a caucus meeting tomorrow before this bill finally comes forward for third reading, so those first-time members, many of whom we know will not be returning members, may want to bring this up in caucus and say: "Listen, Mr. Premier, Mr. Treasurer and Mr. Minister of Revenue, yesterday, while we were eating peanuts in the caucus office, we heard the member for Nipissing talk about this 18-cent gas tax hike and he was making some sense to us. Could we just have a little chit-chat about this in caucus before we smoke this very unfair perpetration on the people of Ontario before third reading?"

I mention it for that reason. I also say they should hearken back three or four years from now to this budget and this day when I pointed it out to them.

The Treasurer has tried to smoke this through by saying it is an increase in tax on leaded gas as a measure which shows his concern for the environment. He is grabbing 18 cents a gallon and he wants us to believe: "I'm concerned about the environment. That's why I'm ripping these people off."

This really is very far from a positive environmental action. I think I pointed out to members that if indeed that were the motive, then a revenue-neutral tax scheme would have been



the order of the day. The government would lower the tax on the leaded gasoline and increase the tax on the unleaded gasoline into a revenue-neutral mode.

Had the Treasurer done that, he could then, in good conscience, have said: "It's an environmental measure. It's revenue-neutral. This is why I did it." We would have all bought that. Nobody buys it when all he does is rip off 18 cents a gallon and put it in his pocket and spend it wherever he may want to spend it, with no dedication to the environment.

It increases the tax burden, not substantially but somewhat, on low-income families, particularly in my neck of the woods. The member for Timiskaming (Mr. Ramsay) will know that he and I share some like constituencies in close geographic proximity which are not the richest areas of this province; indeed, they are some of the poorer areas of the province. They are struggling. They are looking at wages that are substantially below the provincial average and they depend on a vehicle. They do not have a fancy subway zipping up and down Yonge Street and across Bloor Street, buses whipping around all over the place and GO Transit bringing them in and out to work. They rely on their automobile. In some places the roads are so bad they need skidoos, but that is another story. I would like to save that argument for the Minister of Transportation (Mr. Fulton), who cash starves us in northern Ontario when it comes to roads.

Indeed, in those sections of my riding and like sections—I mention the member for Timiskaming—they have to use their automobiles. That is it. That is their only way in and out of town. It is their only way to whatever employment they are able to achieve. Admittedly, a lot of them will save money as they were formerly driving over to Milne Lumber. They no longer have to make that trip because they do not have those jobs any more. They will be looking to other areas to try to find jobs. I suppose they may use their cars even more if they are in the job hunt.

A lot of those people cannot afford new cars that run on unleaded gasoline. I understand that it is difficult for Metropolitan Toronto members to understand and to recognize what is going on in some regions of the province. It is difficult for the civil service, particularly centred here in Toronto, as they whip around in their new Buicks and Oldsmobiles—and that is just the lower-down ones; the higher-up ones I guess are into the government cars, the Cadillacs and the rest of them.

It is very difficult for them to understand what life is like when you drive a 10-year-old half-ton to and from work or a 12-year-old car that relies on leaded gasoline. Those who cannot afford a new car, those areas of the province in my neck of the woods—

**Mr. D. R. Cooke:** How old is your car, Mike?

**Mr. Harris:** I am not talking about me. My car is about a week old. Quite frankly, I do not mind it being public knowledge that I get a new car every year. I am not the one that I am talking about here. In fact, there is no vested interest on my part at all. I am talking on behalf of those constituents throughout northern Ontario who—

**Hon. Mr. Ramsay:** Then you don't need a raise.

**Mr. Harris:** I would be very careful there if I were the member. I am talking on behalf of those constituents across this province who are a little less fortunate than others. This tax is regressive in that nature, I admit not by a large measure, but when you are poor, every cent counts. Take a four-cents-a-gallon increase as it applies to somebody who does not drive his seven-year-old or eight-year-old half-ton or car by choice—when you add four cents a litre to gasoline for someone living in Chapleau or somewhere in northern Ontario where gasoline is already in the 55-cents-a-litre range, with his having to drive 30 or 40 miles for work, you can see that this is regressive in that way.

It really is a necessity in many areas of northern Ontario to own a car. It is not a luxury. It is not a treat. It is not like living in Toronto where you can walk to work, take the subway or the bus and have your Porsche and your Jaguar to zip up to your cottage on the weekends. In many areas of this province, in many of the areas of northern Ontario and indeed in some areas of eastern Ontario as well, it is still pretty tough slugging out there. Anything that impacts negatively on those people we are opposed to.

**1640**

I guess there are a couple of things I would like to close with. First, was this tax to be an environmental move? If so, we ought then to have seen substantially more dollars going into the environment, which we did not see, and we ought to have seen a revenue-neutral method of adjusting the taxation, to make those abuses where vehicles could run just as well on unleaded gasoline—I am not opposed to that principle.

Had the minister brought it in as revenue-neutral, and particularly had he taken my first option, which was to drop the tax on unleaded

gasoline to equalize, then I would not have opposed that move. Had the minister made it revenue-neutral, it would have been difficult for me to oppose that move, because I could then have said: "Yes, the Treasurer is not trying to smoke it through. Yes, he really does care about the environment." But we have seen not one whit of that concern for the environment. We saw a tax grab of 18 cents a gallon in the context of looking at this in conjunction with the sales tax grab of a 14 1/2 per cent increase and the tobacco tax rise which we saw.

Then there is the land transfer taxes. I was talking today in the Legislature with the Minister of Housing (Ms. Hošek), whom I do feel sorry for because I know what happened to the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Kerrio); he lost the fight in cabinet and virtually lost his ministry. In fact, resource policy was taken away from him and given to the Premier and his wife and to the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley).

Now we see the Minister of Housing, whom I indeed did feel sorry for today. While being critical of the proposal, I acknowledged—and I think she concurred—that I really was fighting for her and her ministry. She now appears to have lost the battle. She has been hijacked in the corridors of power. Her power as Minister of Housing has been taken away from her by the Premier and the Treasurer in that greedy tax grab. They are looking at something that will give them \$8,000 a lot and that in fact will probably cost home buyers \$10,000 or \$12,000 by the time the carrying costs are run through. In particular, I mention this in the context of land transfer taxes, which have tripled or quadrupled since this government took power.

It is important, Mr. Speaker, when one compounds it with gasoline taxes—because I sense you want to bring me back to this bill—that it is the compounding part of taxation that is so cruel and shows the true colours of this Premier and this Treasurer. I am sure when they are looking at spending estimates, they say: "Well, how much can we rip them off for and get away with? That's how much we'll spend." Then there are the pressures of some minister saying, "No, we've got to spend more than that." So then they go back to the poor Treasury officials and the poor Ministry of Revenue officials and say: "Sorry, we've got to rip them off even more. Come up with some sneakier ways to do it."

As I started my address today, that indeed is their job, to serve those sneaky political masters who make those sneaky decisions.

**Hon. Mr. Mancini:** Is that parliamentary, "sneaky"?

**Mr. Harris:** Sneaky? I think sneaky is pretty good. It is certainly apt anyway.

It really cannot be much fun being a civil servant in this government, when you know they are reduced to being that sneaky and trying to see how you can rip people off. I do not think it can be near as much fun as it would be with a more positive, outgoing, caring, Conservative government that—

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** That is a contradiction in terms, Michael, and therefore unparliamentary.

**Mr. Harris:** That is another story. As I said, for the civil service in this province and the people in this province, we accept the realities of September 10. We recognize it will be another two and a half, three or four years before that opportunity comes along.

I leave members by saying my party is opposed to this 18-cent-a-gallon tax grab.

**Mr. Faubert:** Eighteen cents?

**Mr. Harris:** Yes, 18.

**Mr. Faubert:** Not 18.

**Mr. Harris:** Now, just a minute. The member must be the parliamentary assistant the way he has been nattering away the last few days. I have kept track of that, but I have been interjected upon by the newly appointed parliamentary assistant. He says it is not 18 cents.

It is four cents a litre for the poor people, so if you multiply that by four and a half, which I think is roughly the number of litres in a gallon, it works out to 18 cents a gallon.

**Hon. Mr. Grandmaitre:** Three cents.

**Mr. Harris:** No, it is four cents. It is a cent across the board and then three cents extra for those, which is four cents.

**Hon. Mr. Grandmaitre:** So you are putting everybody in the same global picture?

**Mr. Harris:** No, it is only 18 cents for the poor people. The government did not hit the rich as hard. For the poor people it is 18 cents a gallon. I am sorry I had to take the parliamentary assistant through that math again, but maybe after a couple of years on the job he will understand how this system works.

We are opposed. We will be voting against this particular bill; in fact, we will be dividing on this particular bill. We point out once again to the people of Ontario that this is a cumulative measure of very far-reaching tax increases, some hidden, as they tried to hide this one under the guise of environment and as they tried to hide the



land transfer tax in the cost of buying land, property and houses.

They have a hidden agenda, it appears, for every one of these things they bring up. I just point out that they are trying to hide this one under the guise of environment because their polling told them: "Slap it on. If you say it has something to do with environment, people might buy it." I say it does not wash. We do not buy it. It is another greedy tax grab, and my party and my caucus will be opposing it.

**Mr. Pouliot:** I really take no pleasure in standing up today to talk about Bill 121, which is another systematic, deliberate and punitive measure to grab more money out of the consumers, especially those less fortunate in northern Ontario.

It was last week that I was on my feet talking about another excess in the cesspool of inefficiency, which was the mugging that took place under the auspices of a one per cent increase in the sales tax on December 10, 1988.

Today, I just received a survey of gasoline, that is, regular unleaded, in some parts of Ontario. In the community of Fort Severn, which is the northernmost settlement in the province, on the shores of Hudson Bay, this morning a litre of regular unleaded gasoline retailed for \$1.08. In Kasabonika in the riding of Lake Nipigon, a native community, it cost \$1 even. In Beardmore, in the southern part of the riding of Lake Nipigon, it cost 54.9 cents a litre; in Nakina, 54.9 cents; in the township of Marathon, which is now the largest township in the riding of Lake Nipigon, 55.9 cents a litre.

Manitouwadge, cave of the Great Spirit, also my home town, was penalized to the tune of 54.3 cents a litre; the township of Geraldton, 54.9 cents; Schreiber, 56.9 cents; the boys at Shell in St. George—this is where the Treasurer lives—47.9 cents. They are doing it to him too, although not to the same tune, because when we got to Toronto and other parts of the Golden Horseshoe this morning, we had three samples: 44.9 cents, 41.3 cents and 42.3 cents.

**1650**

What does it mean at a time when there is no need to increase either the sales tax or, in this case, the gasoline tax? We have excess revenue. The province has been doing extremely well in terms of revenue: a low rate of unemployment, more people employed, money coming in from pretty well all over. There was no need for that supplementary tax grab. World oil prices, spot prices a few weeks back, went as low as \$10 a

barrel. Did the consumer get any benefit from those circumstances? Of course not.

Driving 30,000 kilometres a year is pretty well average in our special part of Ontario, because you have to drive longer distances in northern Ontario, and the climate is colder, so you have to warm up the car. Of course, every time you do so, you are using gasoline. If you were to drive 30,000 kilometres in northern Ontario versus 30,000 kilometres in southern Ontario and you had the same car, an ordinary car with 9.8 kilometres to the litre, it would cost you about \$430 more to do the same in the north than it would in the south.

The members can laugh all they want, but I am talking about people not only in the riding of Lake Nipigon but all through northern Ontario who are being ripped off to the tune of an extra \$400 in the left pocket. In the right pocket there is nothing left. This is no laughing matter, not at all.

Where will it end? We are talking about a necessity, not a luxury. We do not have public transportation systems. Every time we go to the marketplace, we have to use the car to go shopping. We travel to Thunder Bay, in our case, for medical services. Every time we leave home, we take our car to go to work. We take our car to go downtown and check the mail, while we still have a postal system. We go to Thunder Bay, we visit relatives, we drive back and forth. We are constantly driving. We should get a tax break, but we are not getting a tax break. We are paying \$400 more a year on average to drive a car in northern Ontario than they are in southern Ontario.

One of the reasons given behind this, the rationale was that we were going to get better roads. Some of the money the government got from that supplementary tax was going to come back to northern Ontario for better roads.

I am going to tell the Treasurer what has happened. He better than anyone should be aware, because he made it possible. He made that climate possible, to give within a relatively short time \$30 million of taxpayers' money to build a stadium, the SkyDome, for a playpen—

**Mr. Reycraft:** Careful. We might catch you in there.

**Mr. Pouliot:** I do not have to be careful, because I see the injustice. On the one hand, \$30 million of taxpayers' money for the playpen on the waterfront—the government will never get its money back; there is no provision in the arrangement, in the partnership, to get its money

back—but the \$30 million in the heritage fund has yet to be spent.

It is a matter of doing what common sense dictates, of doing what is right. Those prices, when prices worldwide are at the lowest point that they have been in recent years, attest more than anything to the lack of consideration for the people of the north.

We can stand up and say: “If only I understood. That is all I wish to know.” But when I see 54.5 cents, 59.9 cents—it goes on and on—and in some cases \$1 a litre, I really begin to stew. You have to look from within and say: “No, try to be positive. You must not, it is not your mandate to judge others.” But there is really nothing left sometimes. People will say, “Well, don’t get emotional.” In fact: “Don’t talk with your hands. Just tell them very casually.” I have done that and it does not work.

People say, “What about credibility?” Yes, let’s talk about credibility. When I am paying a buck a litre, why make it \$1.01? Why make it \$1.03? Is there ever a time when it is enough that social justice will prevail? On the one hand, thousands of corporations do not pay one penny of tax; 34 per cent of the wealth in Ontario is controlled by one per cent of the population, and that is okay. “Don’t rebel. Don’t be too loud. Take your lunchpail, Joe, go home, work another day and pay more sales tax, pay more gas taxes, more provincial tax.” It never ends.

People are telling me: “I don’t want to work overtime any more. Sure, I’ll grab a couple of hours here and there, but what is the use? The government takes it all.” When we say that the middle class is under siege, we can never be repetitious. We can never say too often that the middle class is literally under siege; it is getting mugged. There is no question about it. There was no need for a supplementary three cents and one cent on leaded and unleaded gasoline. There was no need for that supplementary tax grab. Revenues were up, times indeed were good times, they were prosperous, world prices were down, and what do they do? One more shot, one more time.

On November 24, 10 or 12 days ago, I sent the following letter to the Minister of Energy (Mr. Wong). It goes as follows: “Mr. Minister, allow me to once again remind you of the glaring and embarrassing disparity in the cost of diesel fuel between Canada and the United States. In July of this year, diesel fuel cost paid by Ontario truckers”—those are people making a living trucking goods back and forth in Ontario—“was 45.8 cents a litre.”

Let’s remind ourselves that under free trade, competition will become more and more the order of the day. What I want to convey here is, which is the better place to do business? What does the future have in store for us? “In New York, truckers were paying 28.4 cents.” Remember in July we were paying 45.8 cents; in New York, the truckers were paying 28.4 cents. “In Michigan, 27.9 cents, in California, 25.5 cents a litre.” Those are the people we will be competing with. “In Ohio, 28.4 cents a litre.”

I go on to say that world oil prices have been declining for well over a year—and I have said that before—with world spot prices at around \$10 a barrel. Yet there is not one thread of evidence that these price reductions are being passed on to Ontario consumers. Prices are at the lowest they have been in years by virtue of a glut created by the lack of agreement by members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries. But these disagreements do not last for ever.

#### 1700

In fact, a few days ago members of OPEC reached a tentative agreement, and we have noticed that the spot price of oil has been going up and up for the last 10 days. If we are paying those prices here on December 5, today, when prices are still relatively low, what can we expect to pay when the law of supply and demand is being affected negatively? When the price of that commodity goes up, are we looking at 10 cents a litre more or 20 cents a litre more? I do not know.

It is not going to get any warmer in northern Ontario. We still have to warm up the car, go to the market, take our children to the junction and to the bus station, take our parents to Thunder Bay 250 miles from where I live and take them back another 250 miles, and all that time the clock, the ticking never stops. Every kilometre is being penalized, every mile. Every time you run that engine you are putting money into the Treasury of Ontario, and most of that money stays down south again. It does not come back up north to give us goods and services as promised by the Treasurer, as a rationale and a disguise behind this tax grab. That is what happens.

I dare anyone to go honestly and remind the people of northern Ontario, whose contribution to the coffers of the province is not only proverbial but never-ending, that this supplementary tax on gasoline was a necessity and a benefit for the people of the north. One would indeed be shying away from the truth if it were suggested that this was the case.

To make matters worse, in the Provincial Auditor’s report—when was the report tabled?



The lockup was last Wednesday or Thursday—under “Revenue Taxation Collection”—now this is the Provincial Auditor; we are not talking about just anyone here. Except when he talks about grants to northern Ontario, the Provincial Auditor is almost always right.

The Provincial Auditor gives passing marks to the government, seven out of 10. I give the Provincial Auditor nine out of 10. Sure, maybe he missed the boat. He was tired. He has to work long hours trying to monitor compliance so that the taxpayer gets value for money. It is not easy, but he does his best. He gets tired as he comes to northern Ontario, but aside from that, this is what he says under “Scope and Objective”:

“The ministry has been unable to collect over \$4 million in unpaid taxes identified by recently improved controls over...gasoline and fuel products.”

**Hon. Mr. Grandmaitre:** Read the paragraph before.

**Mr. Pouliot:** Yes. The minister reminds me. He says, “Read.” I am reading from the book. It is page 119. What does the Provincial Auditor say about his ministry? “Millions of dollars in fuel taxes were being lost through export evasion schemes.” He is saying the minister is not doing his job. He is saying the minister is losing \$4 million because he cannot monitor compliance.

Again, the minister may smile. I have to believe either the Minister of Revenue or the Provincial Auditor.

**Mr. Faubert:** You have a choice.

**Mr. Pouliot:** Yes, the member is right. I have a choice. As the vice-chairman of the standing committee on public accounts, I believe, in this instance, in page 119. The Provincial Auditor is right when he tells that, through inefficiency and some negligence, the minister has missed out on collecting \$4 million.

Yet he goes back to the people of the north and says, “You’re not paying enough when you’re paying 53, 54 or 55 cents a litre.” He is convinced he is doing his job. He is not doing his job. He is short \$4 million. Why pick our pockets? Why sock it to the people of the north one more time?

I fail to understand why educated people, people who are given the chance to make a contribution, do not take their responsibilities really seriously. It is agonizing to have to remind the government one more time that what is being done here is not the right thing; it is wrong.

Look at the average family income in Ontario, another statistic that was released last week. We are talking about \$49,000 in average family

income in Ontario. If you go to the riding of Lake Nipigon, the average family income is far lower than that and yet we end up paying more for gasoline than anywhere else in Ontario.

It never stops amazing me that you can go to the Liquor Control Board of Ontario, pick up what is certainly not a necessity—a bottle of liquor or a case of beer—and pay the same price in downtown Toronto, Thunder Bay, Geraldton and Longlac, the same price across the province for a product that is not a necessity in the least. Yet when we are talking about a vital product such as gasoline, it is indeed what the market will bear.

The minister can say what he wants, but I challenge him, with all the sincerity this subject matter demands, to justify a difference of 12 or 13 cents a litre; not a gallon, but a litre.

The Treasurer had the opportunity to come closer to social justice. I believed I would have the opportunity to get up; I was determined to do so—to say: “No if, no but, Mr. Treasurer, the people of northern Ontario are proud of your action. You mean what you say. This is the proof. I do not care what my party is saying. I am not all that concerned about what other people say in that context.”

**1710**

I was going to commend the Treasurer on a job well done. Unfortunately, these statistics barely allow for decorum and good manners, and need a good deal of control, I can assure members. This kind of attitude represents government at its worst. It makes sceptics out of northerners. It pits one section of Ontario against the other to some extent. We do not even begin to catch up, with this kind of endeavour.

It was only last week that I said: “I think you people are beginning to plan well. You have a sense of vision. The promotion is there. The planning is better than it had been under the previous administration. You seem to mean what you say.” But every time I am going to cross that line, take that long walk—

**Mr. Keyes:** Well, come across.

**Mr. Pouliot:** No, you do not need me; you have 94.

Every time I am going to take that long walk, I am always reminded and I get a rude awakening—taxes and more taxes. That is a deterrent. If the government wants to encourage people, and money is the motivator, it should give people their worth, not create a climate where somebody makes a living wage and then when he gets his pay slip, wonders if he is working for the government. There is very little left. Every time

the government does that, it is less money in the economy, less money to create jobs. It is very unfortunate.

The people are waiting for a chance to rectify or remedy what is really an injustice. There is no reason in the world why it should cost \$400 to \$450 a year more to drive a car in northern Ontario than it does in southern Ontario, the only reason being that the price of gasoline is that much higher; no reason whatsoever.

This is a blatant example of mismanagement of the tax system. The people of Ontario have been complaining, and rightly so, for a number of years about the price of electricity, about the price of gasoline, about the shape our roads are in and about the lack of roads. Sometimes I think that over the last 15 or 20 years, we are no further ahead.

There is no reason why we should have to pay electricity rates 10 per cent, 15 per cent and in some cases 20 per cent and 25 per cent higher than people in southern Ontario, no reason whatsoever when we are all responsible for that crown agency. There is no reason why we should have to pay \$400 a year more to drive a car in the north than our counterparts in southern Ontario.

When we are talking about Bill 121, it is a very sad day for the people of the north. I share the feeling of many of my constituents that there was no need for this. It represents government at its worst. The government of the day will be judged very harshly because this does not begin to do justice.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. M. C. Ray):** Are there any comments or questions? Are there any other participants in the debate?

**Mr. Hampton:** If I could, I would like to comment briefly on my colleague's speech.

**The Acting Speaker:** Is this a comment?

**Mr. Hampton:** Yes, Mr. Speaker. I want to commend my colleague the member for Lake Nipigon for putting forward to the House so many of the problems that are shared by all communities across northern Ontario in the many ways people feel we are being treated unfairly.

So many of our enterprises feel they are being subjected to a taxation scheme that unfairly discriminates against them and so many small businesses that are attempting to get started and to generate some economic wealth in northern Ontario feel they are being unfairly penalized.

I want to commend my colleague the member for Lake Nipigon for bringing to this House a very concrete and well-worded message as to exactly what the feeling is across northern

Ontario on the unfair gasoline tax measures of this government.

**The Acting Speaker:** Are there any other comments or questions on the speech by the member for Lake Nipigon? Are there any other participants in the debate? The member for Lake Nipigon may respond if he wishes. He declines. There appear to be no other participants in the debate.

**Mr. Hampton:** I have some comments of my own that I would like to put on the record.

As I said just a few moments ago, I want to commend the member for Lake Nipigon for his comments on this tax bill and his comments on the effects of this tax bill upon the economy of northern Ontario. I agree with all the comments made by my colleague from Lake Nipigon. I can only say that I cannot agree enough with what he has said.

I share with the member for Lake Nipigon a constituency that is at the far northwestern edge of the province. It is a constituency of several isolated communities. It is not unusual in my constituency to leave one community and then drive for two hours and not see anything—no side roads, no gas stations, no signs of civilization whatsoever—until you get to the next community.

People in my constituency do a great deal of driving. What someone in southern Ontario would consider a hazardous trek or a day's drive, from London to Toronto or Toronto to Kingston, people do routinely every day in my part of Ontario. It is not unusual, for example, to see someone who is engaged in the business of logging, in hauling logs to the sawmill or the papermill, get on the road at 2:30 in the morning and drive throughout the day, until six or seven o'clock in the evening, and cover over 500 miles in the course of a day. That is not unusual at all.

For those individuals who are engaged in the practice of logging transportation, or indeed any other kind of transportation in northwestern Ontario, this tax bill and this increase in the gasoline tax is a direct attack on his quality of life, his standard of living and his capacity to make a living. In that sense, it is a grossly unfair attack on people who have to earn their livelihoods in the field of transportation. I can only echo in that respect the comments made by my learned colleague from Lake Nipigon.

This bill is unfair and grossly discriminates in a number of other ways. Unlike Lake Nipigon, my constituency is a border constituency. A number of the communities in my constituency have, directly across the border from them, a sister community in Minnesota. For instance,



directly across the river from the town of Fort Frances, not more than 150 yards across the river, is the community of International Falls, Minnesota. Directly across the international border from the small community of Rainy River is the community of Baudette, Minnesota.

#### 1720

What the government fails to recognize in increasing the level of taxation on gasoline yet again is the outright harm that is done to those businesses which, in the process of attempting to sell gasoline in communities like Fort Frances and Rainy River and other communities close to them, try to employ a number of people. It fails to recognize the difficult position this increase in gasoline tax puts those communities in.

When someone is trying to make a living operating his gasoline station in a community like Rainy River and is attempting to employ two or three people in the operation of his gasoline station, it is incredibly unfair when he has to compete with a gasoline station 150 yards across the border that is selling gasoline for less than one half the cost in Rainy River.

For example, in my home community of Fort Frances, if you go to many of the gasoline service station operators and ask them to give you, either anecdotally or in accounting terms, a record of their sales and a record of the increase or decrease of their business in the last five years, they can very quickly say to you, "There hasn't been any increase, and if I check closely, I think I can show you where there's been a decrease."

That business is going directly across the border into Minnesota. It has got to the point where not only American tourists who are fishing, hunting or sightseeing in northwestern Ontario will pull into a gasoline station near the border and ask for \$2 worth of gas so they can get back across the border and fill up on the American side, but increasingly now Ontario residents are doing it as well.

Their attitude is: "Look, if the government is going to increase this unfair tax, this tax which is absurd in its impact upon the economy of northwestern Ontario, then to hell with it. We'll go across the border and buy our gasoline." That is exactly what is happening. There is not a word of misstatement in saying that someone from a community in northwestern Ontario who is within 30 or 40 miles of a border crossing can pay the bridge toll to cross over to the United States, pay the exchange on the Canadian dollar and still buy the same amount of gas for less than half the price.

That is the uncompetitive position in which this government is putting enterprises all across northwestern Ontario, a very sad situation to be in. Many of the gasoline and service station operators are particularly befuddled, because when the present government came into power, when the present government was waging such a strong battle for its majority government, they thought it was saying: "We're going to change things from what the previous government did. We're going to be a little more fair. We're going to listen to you a little more. We're going to hear you. We're going to take heed of what you're telling us."

Yet now, only a year and a half after the government has achieved its majority status, how quickly it forgets, how quickly it learns not to hear, how quickly it learns to discard what individual small business people all across northwestern Ontario are telling it about the unfair impact of the gasoline tax. How quickly they are learning that this government, as the oft-stated expression so well says, campaigns from the left, campaigns progressively, but governs from the right, governs regressively and imposes regressive and unfair taxes that have regressive and unfair impacts upon a part of the province that cannot afford any further regressive taxation; in fact, has already experienced far too much regressive and unfair taxation.

I say to the government that this tax bill is unfair in its impact all across Ontario. It is a regressive tax, but it is nowhere more regressive, nowhere more harmful and nowhere more unfair than it is in northwestern Ontario. It is unfair to consumers and unfair to those small business people who struggle every day to make a living working in the field of retailing gasoline and gasoline products.

There is another unfair impact in this gasoline tax bill. It is this: I would invite members of the government, as they did when their caucus met in Quetico Centre, to take a tour a little further into northwestern Ontario. If some members venture into Atikokan they will discover that the town of Atikokan has a 25 per cent unemployment rate. It is nothing to smile about, nothing to laugh about. There are a lot of people who are struggling every day to make ends meet, who are struggling every day to earn a meagre standard of living. Many of those people cannot afford to buy a new car which takes unleaded gasoline. They have to use leaded gasoline.

I invite them to go to the community of Ignace where one of the mines has just shut down throwing more than 200 people out of work, or

go to the community of Ear Falls where the mines shut down completely and threw everybody out of work, or go to Kenora to see where the stud mill just closed down throwing 125 people out of work, or go to Rainy River where the railroad recently rationalized its efforts and threw another 100 people out of work.

So many of these people cannot afford to buy a new car which is easy on gasoline and burns unleaded gasoline. A lot of these individuals drive older cars which consume a great deal of gasoline, cars which consume leaded gasoline. When I look at the impact of the increase in the gasoline tax on leaded gasoline, the impact that increase will have on those people, I can only say that this government obviously has very little time and very little consideration for some of those people who are the most hard-pressed in our society and who live in the most hard-pressed regions.

This is like a double whammy. It is bad enough that the tax on unleaded gasoline is going to increase, but when the tax on leaded gasoline is even that much more, the impact is grossly unfair upon so many of those communities which are already under the gun in terms of trying to get along in the modern Ontario economic environment.

**Mr. Miller:** Don't you want to help the environment?

**Mr. Hampton:** Certainly we would like to help the environment. Let me reply to that for a minute. If the government wants to help the environment, it should go after some of the paper companies and the mining companies who have specialized in polluting the environment for years and years. Do not go after some guy who is making the minimum wage plus 10 cents an hour. Go after some of those guys, after it gets done counting how much money they contributed to Liberal Party coffers last year.

1730

It is very interesting when I look at some of the great corporate polluters in northwestern Ontario and I look at some of the returns from the last election and I see where they made their corporate donations. It used to be that I could always count on them giving a fairly substantial chunk to the Progressive Conservative Party, but I noted in the last provincial election they reserved the most generous chunk of their corporate donations for the Liberal Party.

If this government is really concerned about pollution, it should go after some of those fellows. Go after some of the fellows who want to build chemical plants without even bothering

to go to the Ministry of the Environment to get the proper okays before they begin the construction of the chemical plant. In Dryden—and the Minister of the Environment knows all about it—they finally had to discontinue construction of the plant when they found out they were not even building it on their own land.

So I say, if the government is concerned about the environment, it should not go after the small guy who has to burn leaded gasoline, it should go after some of the corporate polluters and do the job right.

Let me put it to the House this way. The government is going to do very well indeed on the new gasoline tax in northern Ontario. As we have said, we estimate that about \$200 million will come from the motorists of northern Ontario, from the gasoline tax. That is \$200 million that northern Ontario cannot afford.

I say again to the government, the small business people who are trying to sell gasoline in many of the border communities cannot afford this gasoline tax, they cannot afford the unfair impact, they cannot afford to see their customers flee across the border to northern Minnesota. So many of the people who are involved in the transportation industry, the logging industry, cannot afford it. So many of those people who live in the economically hard-hit communities across northwestern Ontario cannot afford the unfair impact of this bill either.

The government is simply taking money out of the pockets of those people who are already hard-pressed, who already have a hard time paying the tax bite that is there. It is simply robbing them of a quality of life, a standard of living, that is below the average of Ontario and a standard of living they already have to work too hard at, and devote too many hours of the day to, to preserve in any way.

So I say to this government, this is a very shameful act indeed. This is a very shameful increase in the gasoline tax. It is a very unfair one, a very regressive one, and the people of northwestern Ontario will remember the Liberals two and a half or three years down the road when it comes time to add up the tally sheet as to how fair this government has been and how well it has listened. They are not fooling anyone with this one.

I would suggest that this government look very seriously, and do it soon, at ways of cutting the gasoline tax, cutting its unfair and regressive impact across Ontario, but especially upon the people of northwestern Ontario, who have to rely more than any other part of the province upon



gasoline as a means of transportation and who have to travel longer distances than anyone else in Ontario if they want to earn a living and if they want to see an increase in whatever type of small business they own.

So I would urge the government very seriously to make this the last increase in gasoline tax, and in the coming year to get down to business in terms of reducing the gasoline tax, before it puts everybody out of business in northwestern Ontario.

**Mr. Cousens:** We could be dealing with many other bills in the Legislature that are very important, but unfortunately, we have to deal with one of the most regressive types of legislation possible, that is, this government again putting its hands in the pockets of the taxpayer.

There has never been a bigger tax grab than the grab that has been perpetrated on the people of Ontario by the present Treasurer and this Minister of Revenue. They smile when they do it so that you are almost taken in by their captivating friendship and their marvellous way of being nice to people, but they are greedy, they are hungry, they are taking our money and then they are squandering it.

If they were doing something with it other than just coming along and building a larger government, we would not be as upset. The fact is it is wrong and it is not going to get any better the way these guys are running this government. The people of Ontario are going to remember what they are doing three years from now, if they last that long.

They may last, but we are going to be here and we are going to keep reminding the people of Ontario that we are not at all happy with the way they are running this government and with the way they are running this province.

We happen to be in a situation where it is prospering, but they are just taking the cream off. They cannot keep their hands off the cream, and what do they do with it? It curdles. It goes sour when it gets in their hands because they do not know how to use it properly. They do not affect the deficit. If you were using some of the money from the gasoline tax—Mr. Speaker, and I do have to speak through you—if this government were spending the money on roads, then the people of Ontario would begin—

**Hon. Mr. Grandmaitre:** Highway 407?

**Mr. Cousens:** But you are not. Highway 407—yes, sir.

I will go for roads because the infrastructure of Metropolitan Toronto is suffering with the lack

of investment on the part of this government on needed services that we have to have.

**Mr. Pelissero:** That was the previous Tory government.

**Mr. Cousens:** Come on, now. If this government is going to have the most successful economy in this province, the most successful city as far as the economic centre of Canada is concerned, and if this is going to be a place where the government wants tourists to come, then it better have roads to get them in and out of this city. The amount of money that it is putting in roads in this city is negligible. It is not even beginning to touch on the need. The money the government spends on roads goes right back into the economy. It goes back into the salaries of the people who are making it happen. What it needs is a few megaprojects that have to do with keeping the economy of this province going.

If the government took all the tax money that it takes out of drivers of cars and put it back into roads, we would have a system that works. But what, in fact, we have right now is a system that is just slowly breaking down. It is not even putting enough money in to maintain the bridges and the roads the way they should be. There is going to a mammoth amount of cost in order to make this system come together again.

We are dealing with a form of corruption that is worse than the kind where you can come along and put them in jail. It is just so ongoing. It is because out of one side of its mouth we hear this government say, "Oh, we are going to do this, this and this," and yet the end result is nothing—just more window dressing. It is filling potholes. That is about the extent of what this government does for roads. It does not have a long-term strategy to build a network of roads to strengthen the system around Metro and the greater Metro area. There is no community right now that is not suffering greatly because of this.

In my own community it is a very serious problem. I think the growth will stop. If it stops, it is going to affect the whole economy that goes on around this area because it is generation of wealth through the building of homes, through the furniture they buy and through the cars that those people buy. You have to continue to grow in order to be able to maintain a strong economy. But our economy is becoming strangulated because this government is not building the necessary services that will allow this economy to continue to be strong.

**Mr. Adams:** Becoming strangulated? It is being strangulated.

**Mr. Cousens:** It is not a joke. For the ladies and gentlemen who are watching this from television land, I will just tell them there are smiles on the faces of everybody here, except for the Minister of Agriculture and Food (Mr. Riddell). He has not smiled since he was given that portfolio. Everybody else just makes a joke of what is going on around Metro. It is no joke. It is no joke at all.

**Mr. Faubert:** It's your grammar that's a joke.

**Mr. Cousens:** There is the member for Scarborough-Ellesmere (Mr. Faubert) who is sitting over there, sent down here to represent the people. He is saying it is no joke and so on. He should tell me when he is going to do something about the roads. When is he going to do something to solve the dilemma of the people who are spending longer and longer hours a week, more and more time every day on the Don Valley Parkway, more and more time on Highway 401? The government does not even know how to schedule the repairs and to do them so that people can get around them. This city is becoming a strangled mess, and here it comes along, right now—

**Mr. Carrothers:** Strangled.

**Mr. Cousens:** Well, a strangled mess. But it is enough to be concerned about, and the government is not. I think it is time the government began to be concerned. Look at the amount of money it is going to take from the taxpayers of Ontario with this additional three cents per litre on leaded gasoline, and increasing the unleaded by another cent.

It just keeps on adding and adding. As well, it is a hidden tax, because when people buy their gas—they have to buy it—they have no idea just how many of those dollars are going into it.

1740

I would like to get some answers from the Minister of Revenue. I would be delighted if he could tell this House when he has a chance, how many dollars come out of, for instance, my community of Markham for gasoline taxes. Perhaps he could just show me the number of dollars that come out of my community for gasoline taxes, on the one side, and then on the other, tell me how many dollars go back into that community to build roads so that we could see something.

You would expect gasoline tax to be tied in to the roads and services. How much of that is going back into the construction and maintenance of roads and highways? I would love to see that.

I know that the dollars that are being poured from our community and the greater Metropolitan Toronto area alone—York region, Peel and Durham, along with the municipalities of Metropolitan Toronto, for instance—are all going into the coffers of the provincial Treasury. How much of that money goes back into those communities to build roads?

I will tell members this much: There has not been any great expenditure on roads by this government since it took power. It announced Highway 407 with a great deal of fanfare. The silver shovel that the Premier used to open up the highway cost more than the amount of money the government put into the highway. The project to build Highway 407 is going to cost \$650 million.

**An hon. member:** Tell the truth.

**Mr. Cousens:** Is it more or less?

**Mr. Adams:** Yes, definitely more or less.

**Mr. Cousens:** I am asking. If some honourable member in this House thinks that I am not telling the truth, I would like to have him just stand up in his place. Is it the member for Brantford (Mr. Neumann)? I am wondering if it is the member for Kenora (Mr. Miclash). If there is anyone who questions my figure that Highway 407 is going to cost over \$650 million, I would like to see him stand up in his place right now.

If anyone wants to question the figure that this government is putting in only \$25 million the first year and approximately \$25 million the second year, that means it will be 24 to 25 years before this highway will be completed. This government has to accelerate the development of roads and highway structures in and around this province.

I would like to speak eloquently for the needs of northern Ontario, eastern Ontario, western Ontario and the rest of Ontario, but all I can speak about is the area that I know best. I represent the riding of Markham. I am concerned about the needs of Durham, York, Peel and the greater Metropolitan Toronto area, and I know this government is not as committed to roads as it should be. Any government that has a great big sod-turning ceremony to start a new highway with the intention of taking 24 to 25 years to build it, which is the length of time it is going to take to build Highway 407, really should be kicked out of office. I will just tell members this much: If I could, I would, but my boot is not big enough.

The people of Ontario will have that chance, and one of the single, most important issues that touches upon people every day of their lives in and around Toronto is the transportation problem. They are getting more and more angry about



it. They are fed up, and they are becoming fed up with this government's lack of commitment to do something to solve it.

If we knew that our dollars from an increase in gasoline tax were going into the construction of roads and the improvement of services, there would not be that same sense of regret. There would be a sense of knowing that the right thing was being done with our money, that it was being invested wisely. The fact of the matter is this government is not doing it, but there is still time. There is still time that it could do something about it. The Minister of Transportation could accelerate Highway 407, take some of the gas tax money that comes out of our area and put it into the building of that highway, so we would get it an awful lot sooner and we could do an awful lot more with the other roads and networks around Metropolitan Toronto.

I do not think that many people realize it, but in Toronto this last summer there was one night in which they had gridlock. Many members would not even know what gridlock is, but that occurs when all the highways, all the major routes, all the regional routes and all the small feeder roads are clogged up together. It took three or four hours, at least, before Metropolitan Toronto was able to get the traffic moving again. We are going to see more gridlock in Metropolitan Toronto, believe my words, unless we begin to do something to solve the problem of the transportation coming in and out of this city.

There is a combination of things that need to be done. We have to do something about the road system; we have to do something to get the traffic moving better, and not just Mr. Eggleton's idea of making certain parts of Toronto one-way streets. There are many, many things that need to be done, but there has to be a strategy on roads. There has to be a strategy to get people to use commuter services, and that is not available either.

We have got to do something about GO Transit. We have GO trains in my riding. There are two trains, two different routes of services that are provided for people in my area. One comes from Richmond Hill down through Langstaff and Oriole, and there are three trains a day. That is the same service, three in the morning and three at night, that was introduced in 1976. There are surveys every six months asking people: "Do you want more service?" and yet ever since that service was installed there has been no change to it.

We had a train brought into Stouffville, Markham and Unionville in 1981. When that

train was inaugurated, it was agreed that there would be a second train brought on that system, but we are still waiting for it.

If we are going to bring people in and out of Metropolitan Toronto from the north, we should be providing the same kind of services that we have for those who travel east and west into Metropolitan Toronto. They can come from Oshawa and they can come from Oakville and there are trains running throughout the day, but in our area of York region there are just no comparable services to get people to leave their cars at home.

What we need is a strategy on the part of this government that says, "We're going to do something to get the commuters going." We have one of the best already-built railway systems that any city could hope for. But to what extent are we using it? Hardly at all. It is still not too late for this government to come out with a strategy to get commuters to use something other than their cars. There needs to be a transportation strategy that is going to improve the road networks; there has to be a transportation strategy to get commuters to use public transit.

In fact, you cannot look at GO Transit without looking at the Toronto Transit Commission. The TTC has what you would call just a real wall around Metropolitan Toronto. Any of the outlying areas that want to use the TTC have to work out special private arrangements in order to make that possible. What we really have to do is have some integration of these services.

The province heavily subsidizes Metro Toronto's TTC services, but when our communities outside of Metro Toronto want to hook into them, it is at a very heavy cost to the local taxpayers. What I am asking for is that we can begin to have a comprehensive plan for the TTC, so that those who are in Metro and out of Metro can somehow have that service made available to them.

When we are talking about GO Transit and TTC, let's begin to put some investment into a subway system that is going to begin to touch on the needs of this great Metropolitan Toronto area. It is just a tragedy that we have not done anything more about the Sheppard subway, except a few games that are being played to take a small extension from Wilson up to Sheppard. There has got to be some real investment made in order to get the Sheppard subway going.

There should be an ongoing commitment to build more subways, and there has not been anything. Now you are seeing the Yonge Street line almost at overcapacity. The number of people who are using that system—I do not have

the numbers. They are not in front of me right now. Is it 1.6 million who use it a day? It is an incredible number. It will soon be at 1.7 million. In order to continue to attract people to use the system, this government should continue to do something to improve the service. That has not been done. This government has been so generous with its words, yet it has not been generous with its commitment to do something about it.

We are talking about a gasoline tax, and I have a very simplistic way of looking at it. If as much money as is gathered out of the gasoline were spent on roads and commuter services, then we would begin to have a quality system in this province. I would think it is still not too late for the Minister of Revenue, who is one of the more influential people in that cabinet, to come along and cause some change to be made. He is key to the government. He collects the taxes and surely he can influence some of the spending habits of the other ministries, so that they could something about the important needs of the people of Ontario.

**1750**

I did not intend to speak this afternoon, but inasmuch as these subjects had not been adequately covered, I felt I would take few moments just to touch upon a very easy quid pro quo. For any dollar or any cent that someone puts into the gas tax, why cannot that dollar be invested in the building of better road systems, better commuter services?

If there is anything the minister can do about that, I would be most impressed by it and I would be the first to congratulate him in the House. The Minister of Revenue has shown himself as one who is capable of making things happen. If only they could do it in the rest of the government, we would be proud of them. Unless they can begin to do that soon, we are going to have to push them and push them and push them until the people of Ontario push them right out of Ontario.

**Mr. Adams:** I was very interested in the speech of the member for Markham (Mr. Cousens) on the transportation system in the province. I thought I would mention a few things which I think will be of interest to him and to you, Mr. Speaker.

This year alone, on Highway 115 between Highway 401 and Peterborough, something in the order of \$10 million is being spent. Most of that money is being spent on overpasses. The foundations of those will be completed this fall and the four-laning of the highway will continue next summer. At the same time, Highway 28,

between Peterborough and Highway 401 but in a slightly different direction, has been greatly improved. The bends and the curves on it have been improved at a cost of several more millions of dollars.

An interesting thing is that the member mentioned Highway 407. He may not realize that Highway 115, as it is projected, will be a part of Highway 407 and the section from Highway 35 to Peterborough, which runs in more of a west to east direction than north-south, is designed so that it can be expanded to eight lanes and be a part of Highway 407. To that extent, funds are being spent this year on Highway 407 itself.

The member also mentioned GO Transit, Mr. Speaker. I would like to remind you and members of the House that GO Transit was extended only yesterday to Whitby, which is very convenient for many people in Markham. Those of us in that part of the province are looking forward eagerly to the further extension of GO Transit to a terminal which will be located at the Holiday Inn at the east end of the city of Oshawa, very convenient for the people of Peterborough and adjacent areas.

I would simply say to the member that I appreciated his remarks in many respects and I am delighted at his interest in the transportation system. I thought he should know that a great deal is being done.

**Mr. Neumann:** I listened with interest to the comments of the member for Markham and would like to respond briefly.

The member commented at length about the lack of progress on Highway 407. I would like to inform the House and the member that recently in the Brantford Expositor, I noticed in the column which they print every day entitled "25 Years Ago" that the government of the day was promising a speedy construction of Highway 403 through that area.

Well, 25 years later, Highway 403 is still not completed. Our minister in this government is making good progress on that project now, but I would remind the member that it was the previous Conservative government which left the people in that region waiting, short on delivery of the promises made.

Furthermore, I am interested in hearing comments such as the member made with respect to the need to spend more money on Highway 407 and on subways and on this and that. At the same time, we generally hear from the Conservative benches comments that we should be cutting down and not spending as much money as we are.



At least this government recognizes that there are real needs out there in Ontario and that the revenue has to be raised to meet those needs. I know that the people in our community appreciate that. As our Treasurer has pointed out, there are two kinds of deficits. There is the deficit in the budget, but there is also the deficit in facilities which this government inherited from the previous government, where there was a lag in the construction of schools and roads and the infrastructure across the province. With the revenues raised, we are making up for those kinds of deficits and meeting the needs of the province.

**Mr. Laughren:** I was not going to comment on the remarks of the member for Markham, but I was struck by his solution to the problems of the province.

I am sure that people out there in television land who watch these debates in a religious kind of way must be wondering why all these wonderful solutions that the Tories are laying before us these days were not put in place when they were in government for 42 years. I am sure there must be a real sense of puzzlement all across Ontario. I hope the member for Markham is consistent in his pitch that whatever money is raised, that is the way the money is then spent.

I can imagine the Cadillac of antidrinking campaigns we are going to have in the province if all the money collected from alcohol taxes is spent on educating people on the dangers of alcohol consumption; or I think of my friend the member for Norfolk (Mr. Miller), who is always concerned about the plight of his tobacco farmers, as he should be. I could imagine that if we spent all the money from tobacco revenues on teaching people about the evils of smoking, it might be a very good thing. However, the member for Norfolk might not agree with that.

I was intrigued by the comments by the member for Peterborough (Mr. Adams) about the

member for Markham's remarks that what this province needs is not just better bends and curves, but more bends and curves. I think that is what he said about the highway system in Ontario. I am looking forward to the response by the Minister of Revenue as to exactly how the moneys that he collects should be spent on the highway system in Ontario.

**Mr. Cousens:** Maybe I am launching my leadership campaign right here and now. If what we need is some leadership, then that is one thing that is not coming from the Liberals. The other thing is that they sure do not have their facts right. So as we look into the future of this province—

**Mr. Faubert:** It's a long way to Tipperary.

**Mr. Cousens:** No, the problem is that they have been given the chance to lead and they are doing nothing except being greedy on the taxpayers. One day we have to worry about the Ontario provincial retail sales tax; now today we are talking about the gasoline tax, and the next day we are going to be into alcohol.

The ladies and gentlemen of Ontario have to worry about what the government does to their pockets. It is worse than having a hole in them. Their hands go in and they just take it out. I am concerned about roads. I think we can do something about them. If members of this government sat down together with us, we could show them the solution. We have been trying to give it to them over the last several years. I was trying to do it when I was in the backbenches of our government. I will continue to fight for what I believe in. That is something that we would like to see from them.

On motion by Mr. Laughren, the debate was adjourned.

The House adjourned at 6 p.m.

## ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS\*

(130 seats)

First Session, 34th Parliament

Lieutenant Governor: Hon. Lincoln M. Alexander, PC, QC

- 
- Adams, Peter (Peterborough L)  
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 Black, Kenneth H. (Muskoka-Georgian Bay L)  
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# Hansard

## Official Report of Debates

### Legislative Assembly of Ontario



**First Session, 34th Parliament**  
Tuesday, December 6, 1988

Speaker: Honourable Hugh A. Edighoffer  
Clerk of the House: Claude L. DesRosiers

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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday, December 6, 1988

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayers.

## VISITORS

**Mr. Speaker:** I would ask all members of the Legislative Assembly to recognize in the Speaker's gallery a member of the West German parliament who is a member of the foreign relations committee and the defence committee. Please join me in welcoming Count Hans Huyn.

Also in the Speaker's gallery, we have the member-elect for the federal riding of Markham, Bill Attewell.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### CHRISTMAS CATALOGUE

**Mr. Allen:** For the second year, the Globe and Mail has issued its exclusive Christmas collection it calls The Best of Toronto. Examples tell us clearly where the Globe appears to stand in the battle with poverty in Ontario: for example, a single room rug, worth \$120,000 or 17 years of social assistance to a single disabled woman; a single china setting, worth \$2,300 or 1,000 community breakfasts for poor kids in Toronto; matching jewellery, \$36,500 or the difference between poverty and frugal comfort for a two-income minimum-wage family of four for 14 years; or another neat piece of jewellery, a necklace, \$140,000 or what would lift one single working poor person to a living wage for 24 years.

This is not the best, this is the worst of Toronto, which under this government is unfortunately becoming a class-ridden city where the rich get richer and the poor get poorer. This catalogue tells the sad story of chief executive officers leading the pack in double-inflation salary increases while the poor get 20 cents more in a minimum wage. It tells of developers bidding up land prices and driving low-income families out of housing and off to food banks.

How could a self-respecting newspaper remotely think this was the spirit of Christmas or a slightly moral publication? The Premier (Mr. Peterson) has had his inquiry into poverty. When is he going to look at the corrosive effects of undue wealth in Ontario?

## AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY

**Mr. Villeneuve:** The midterm review of the Uruguay round of talks on the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade marks a pivotal point in the evolution of world agricultural trade. Last year governments paid out the equivalent of an estimated US\$220 billion in agricultural subsidies. While not all these payments were trade distorting, there is no question that the subsidies issue is the most contentious on the GATT agenda and its resolution will have a direct impact on Ontario agriculture.

We in this party have consistently maintained and have repeatedly told this government that the real threat to Ontario's supply management and marketing board systems lies not in the free trade agreement, but in the GATT. In particular, we have warned of the potential dangers of a GATT article XI challenge against our marketing boards. At this crucial time, we hope the Ontario government will do something different, something new and take a constructive approach to trade policy for a change as opposed to what the members who are interjecting are saying now.

The government of Ontario should work closely with the federal government to ensure that the interests of Ontario farmers are fully recognized and protected in the GATT and in any agreements relating to the agricultural trade issues of access and subsidies. Ontario farmers should not pay the price for this government's incoherent trade policy. This Ontario Liberal government developed a bad case of tunnel vision—

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Villeneuve:** —because of the free trade agreement and must now turn its attention to the broader issue affecting Ontario agricultural issues.

**Mr. Speaker:** I found it somewhat difficult to hear the last—

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

## DIAPERS

**Mr. Adams:** I would like to return to disposable diapers. These create environmental

problems because the plastic in them persists for ever in dumps.

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. I wish the members would show a little respect for other members who wish to make statements.

**Mr. Adams:** These diapers create environmental problems as the plastic in them persists for ever in dumps and inappropriate disposal of diaper contents creates health hazards. This is no small problem as one child uses 1,000 diapers a year. Also, some seven million adults in North America use disposable diapers. These produce 37,000 tonnes of dangerous waste in Ontario alone, one per cent of the municipal waste stream, yet there are easily available, equally convenient, cheaper alternatives.

There are biodegradable plastic diapers, there are cloth and plastic reusable diapers and diaper-laundering services are widely available at a fraction of the cost of disposable diapers. When members are approached by consumers trying to make environmentally sound choices, I urge they use one simple answer: If in doubt, buy durable, buy degradable.

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

#### CRASH OF AIR AMBULANCE

**Mr. McLean:** My statement is directed to the Minister of Health (Mrs. Caplan). She is aware of and has shown a great interest in the air ambulance crash on November 27 near Chapleau, Ontario, which killed two paramedics, a pilot and a co-pilot.

It has been suggested that paramedic Ian Harris of Orillia had feared such a tragedy could happen, because the North Bay based airline did not have enough experience flying out of the government's Timmins air ambulance base. As it turned out, this fatal flight was the first this company made out of the Timmins air base where it had only recently assumed a government contract previously held by Air Ontario, another private carrier.

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Ironically, Mr. Harris had travelled to Toronto to take part in a November 17 rally at Queen's Park to demand a province-wide ambulance inquiry. At that time, Mr. Harris warned that the experience of the pilots and the quality of the air operations were not up to standard.

The Ontario Public Service Employees Union and both opposition parties of this Legislature have urged the minister to conduct a public

inquiry into this tragic crash and her ministry's policy of contracting ambulance services to private firms, and now Mr. Harris's father, Rawson, has also called for a public inquiry. A public inquiry will not bring back Ian Harris, but it could prevent a similar tragedy from occurring again. I urge the minister to conduct a public inquiry immediately.

#### REDUCE IMPAIRED DRIVING EVERYWHERE

**Mr. Kanter:** I am rising today to acknowledge the contribution of the private sector to the Reduce Impaired Driving Everywhere program in my riding of St. Andrew-St. Patrick and throughout the greater Metro area.

A very attractive poster has been donated by several media firms, including Telemedia Procom; McLaren Morris and Todd; and Bergman Graphics. I would like to advise members that it is available at the new Metro police headquarters building located at 40 College Street, which happens to be in my riding.

Other incentives have been provided, ice scrapers and discount coupons. They are made available to motorists who pass spot checks successfully. They have been contributed by a number of corporate sponsors, including the Toronto Automobile Dealers Association, Bank of Nova Scotia, Warkworth Enterprises, Canada Dry, Becker Milk Co. Ltd., TransCanada PipeLines, Canadian National Institute for the Blind, Brewers' Warehousing Co., Insurance Bureau of Canada and Co-operators Insurance.

I would like to acknowledge the important contribution that these and other corporate sponsors of the RIDE program have made. They are providing publicity and positive incentives to make our roads safer, both during the festive season and throughout the year.

#### AMBULANCE SERVICES

**Mrs. Marland:** I rise today to speak out on behalf of the residents of Halton and Mississauga, who are now enduring almost four months of an ambulance strike.

In rising, I also welcome and recognize some members of the Halton-Mississauga ambulance organization sitting in the gallery to my left. These people are committed professionals. They are ambulance officers who want to work. They do not want to be sitting here in the House when they could be out driving the ambulances that are most needed for the health care of the people in those communities.



We are desperately frustrated, the people who live there; the people who have experienced firsthand far less than adequate response times. We are aware that the Minister of Health (Mrs. Caplan) has said repeatedly in the House that she is assured that the public in Halton-Mississauga are not at risk. We do not know who is assuring the minister, but we know that 35- or 40-minute response times do put the public at risk and we have documented cases where that is so.

We plead with this government to put an end immediately to this risk to the public. We are coming into a season of bad weather which we know will accelerate the number of traffic accidents alone. It is not good enough that the government chooses to ignore these people and their risks.

#### TERRY PIANE

**Mr. Callahan:** I rise on behalf of myself and my colleague the member for Brampton North (Mr. McClelland) to pay tribute to an alderman with whom I served on city council, who early on in her term discovered that she had cancer. She very bravely served out the full balance of her term and died just recently. I would like to pay tribute to Terry Piane, an alderman I found to be a very sensitive and caring person, and express my sympathies to her family.

#### VISITOR

**Mr. Speaker:** If the members would allow me, I would like to draw their attention to a former member for Lincoln, Ross Hall, in the gallery. Please join me in welcoming Mr. Hall.

#### STATEMENT BY THE MINISTRY

##### SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

**Hon. Mr. Sweeney:** I am announcing today increases to Ontario's social assistance system, including new family benefits and general welfare assistance rates for 1989.

Over the last three years, we have taken a number of necessary steps and have embarked on the planning for the future which is so essential to ensure a system that meets the needs of its recipients.

Since we took office in 1985, Ontario has increased its social assistance benefits by \$337 million. We have raised benefit levels by an average of 23.9 per cent, well above the rate of inflation, including some important adjustments to the existing system. These changes include:

A children's winter clothing allowance which next year will amount to \$89 per year per child; in September 1986, \$25-million worth of improve-

ments to our shelter subsidy program; an increase of \$50 per month in the benefits paid to disabled people under our family benefits program; \$1.8 million to raise the personal needs allowance for residents of institutions from \$77 per month to \$100 per month; removal of the regressive spouse-in-the-house rule; and finally, \$20 million to ensure that utility costs paid separately from rent are taken into account in determining the amount of shelter subsidy.

I am announcing today a five per cent increase in the basic allowance for social assistance recipients effective January 1, 1989. The maximum shelter subsidy will also be increased by five per cent. This represents additional provincial spending of \$92.1 million annually.

I am also announcing today another step towards a fairer social assistance system. As of April 1, the \$100 monthly personal needs allowance paid to nonelderly adult residents of many of our institutions will be extended to residents of psychiatric hospitals, homes for special care which are funded by the Ministry of Health, as well as residents of my ministry's facilities for the developmentally handicapped. The total cost of this initiative is \$9.2 million.

In total, then, the increases to the system I am announcing today amount to more than \$101 million, for a total, since this government took office, of \$438 million.

Members are aware that in addition to these increases, the report of the Social Assistance Review Committee recommended fundamental reforms to the social assistance system in Ontario. Given the significance of these changes, the committee recommended the government take up to six months to review the report in detail.

To that end, over the next three months, my cabinet colleagues and I will consult on the specifics of the Social Assistance Review Committee report with special emphasis on stage one. The consultation will include other levels of government, especially municipalities, organizations with expertise in social services and members of the business community. This consultation process will assist the government in developing its response to the report.

#### RESPONSES

##### SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

**Mr. Allen:** It is hard to find words to describe what the minister has stood up and said today. In light of what the Thomson committee has proposed to this province and what he and his ministry and government have known was

coming over the last couple of years, they could have made provision for action long before this to meet the needs of the working poor and those on social assistance in this province.

He has done none of even the less costly items which might have been done in the course of these past few months. And nothing appears to be coming in the next three months, nothing about appeal or administrative delays, nothing to reduce tax-back rates on earnings, nothing to extend earnings exemptions for earnings under family benefits, nothing to meet real housing costs for social assistance recipients.

If you look at the amounts the minister announced today, a single disabled basic needs recipient would still only be at 58 per cent of the poverty line, a nondisabled couple would be receiving only 49 per cent of the poverty line, a mother and child on welfare would be only 44 per cent of the poverty line.

Mr. Speaker, you look at the rates that were announced today and you discover that after you adjust for inflation, the amount the social recipient is receiving in this province is only what it was in 1975. We have made no progress whatever, and the minister is dreaming in Technicolor if he thinks his figures amount to anything for the poor in this province.

As for his announcement for the personal needs allowance, it took three months of our protests to get the minister to stand up and make this announcement today of an extra \$100. That is one item out of 274 items that Thomson listed. At that rate, it is going to take 68 years for this minister to do something about Thomson.

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**Mr. B. Rae:** The statement made by the minister today is as unconscionable as any that even he has made in this Legislature. To do it at this time of year, as if this represented any kind of achievement on the part of this government or any kind of justice for the people of this province who need social assistance and who qualify for social assistance, I just find offensive.

Not only are the amounts offensive, not only is the fact that even with a five per cent increase—as the minister well knows, Judge Thomson told us very clearly that even with an increase that kept in line with inflation, poor people in this province are no better off in real terms, in real dollar terms, than they were 13 years ago. If the minister thinks that is something to be proud of and if his colleagues who were applauding him a moment ago think that is some kind of achievement worth applauding, then they live in a very different universe than the one I live in.

I also want to say that for the minister to say today that his sole response to Thomson is that he is now going to start a consultation process for the next three months, some three months after Thomson, is in itself a disgrace. His initial response to the Thomson report was to tell the reporters on that day—and how well I remember his face on the national news as he said what a wonderful report he thought it was—and to assure everyone that it would be given priority, that it would be done as a whole, that it would be administered by him and with pride by him and that he would be pushing for it and moving for it.

What do we have some three months later? An admission by the minister that he has not consulted with anyone, that he has not sat down with the municipalities and developed any kind of strategy, that he has not sat down with the interest groups and developed any kind of strategy, that he has not even managed to convince the Treasurer (Mr. R. F. Nixon) as to with what kind of priority this vital report, with a very substantial expenditure of public moneys, is going to be included in this year's budget.

The minister knows perfectly well that unless that information and plan are on the Treasurer's desk today, and put through a fight through Treasury and through Management Board of Cabinet starting months ago, it simply will not happen. The minister knows that perfectly well. He has been a minister long enough to know how the process works. To suggest otherwise to the poor people in this province is simply to lead them down a garden path.

Organized groups of poor people across this province are beginning to understand this government for what it is: a government that during the minority period appointed Judge Thomson and asked him to do a thorough review, that got the review from Judge Thomson and that since that time has sat on its hands and done nothing to relieve the poverty, the hardship, the hunger and the homelessness that affect thousands and thousands of our fellow citizens right now. It is simply not acceptable.

**Mr. Cousens:** This is a sad day, a sad day for the Minister of Community and Social Services (Mr. Sweeney) and a very sad day for the people he has been given the authority to serve and to do something for. I find it difficult to describe the agony that is going to be prolonged for those people who are looking for something that would come out of Transitions, a report that Judge Thomson and a group released on September 1, a report that gave them reason to have hope for the future, a report that really said that the govern-



ment took seriously the needs of those people in our society.

What we have got today is the reiteration of some of the things that the government has done. I am sure many of those things would not have been done had we not put the pressure on the government at the time to provide the winter clothing allowance and to do something about the subsidies. This government has reacted to things only because we have pushed it, because the opposition has pushed it and the people in Ontario have pushed it. They are going to have to start pushing an awful lot harder in order to get the government's attention.

The Minister of Community and Social Services has lost a battle. He lost the battle for the people he was called to serve to the Treasurer and to the other members of cabinet who have not heeded the needs of the people of this province. In fact, when they started talking about the implementation of Transitions they called for an immediate increase. It is three months later, and now the minister is talking about another three months in order to continue his analysis and evaluation. That is not good enough; it is not good enough for him, it is not good enough for the people of Ontario.

We are in a position where we should see a phasing in of the proposals that came from Judge Thomson's report. The minister is now talking not about the one month that the report called for but six months before that will begin to happen. This report might well end up with the same kind of dust on it that the Thom commission has at the Ministry of Housing, where they just go and shelve it. About \$3 million has been spent on preparing it, and now the government is not prepared to implement its provisions.

This government is not only slow and tardy; it is failing even to keep up with the cost of living. The cost of living increase right now is 5.1 per cent, and the minister is not even at the cost-of-living level. Why not? I think this is an uncaring government which is not showing the compassion and consideration that it has been given the right to do.

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Cousens:** This minister was in a position to do something about psychiatric patients, so there is now a \$100 monthly allowance. May I suggest to the Speaker and other honourable members of this House that this minister was going to appeal that decision of the court. This is not a generous act of the government. This is a

response to a court order to do something about that.

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, the member for Muskoka-Georgian Bay (Mr. Black).

**Mr. Cousens:** I think they are just embarrassed.

Because of the fact that I have been elected to represent some of the people of Ontario, I would like to stand up for those people who cannot stand up in this House and defend themselves. The outrageous remarks from the other members of this House, who are not allowing me the right to have this opportunity to speak without these interruptions, I find are disgusting and reprehensible. It is typical of what this government is trying to do.

We will not see the people muzzled in Ontario and we will fight for the people. We know they deserve more and we know it is right for the government to get working on it.

Interjections.

**Mr. Cousens:** I am really sorry that the House does not have at least some sense of the urgency of what this issue is all about. When other members are taking this as something that is fun, I see this as a really disgusting moment in the province of Ontario.

The Minister of Community and Social Services has not even met the level of inflation. I have to say that this is a sad moment for the people of Ontario on general welfare assistance and it is a sad moment for the people on family benefits allowance. Let us hope that something more can happen.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

**Mr. B. Rae:** I wanted to ask the Premier (Mr. Peterson) this question, but since he is not here, I will ask the Minister of Financial Institutions.

A 30-year-old driver with one year's experience, according to the report that has been tabled with the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board, is now paying somewhere between \$1,237, or, according to another company, \$1,294. According to the proposed increase, it will now go up to \$2,650—which is an increase of over 100 per cent, Mr. Speaker, in case you are wondering what kind of increase that is for a 30-year-old driver with one year's experience.

Let's say that 30-year-old driver was watching television on the evening of September 7, 1987. That driver heard the leader of the minister's party, now the Premier, say, "We have a very

specific plan to lower auto insurance rates in this province.”

Can the Minister of Financial Institutions tell us what that driver should now think about his party and the leader of his party when it comes to automobile insurance in this province?

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**Hon. Mr. Elston:** I thank the honourable gentleman for the question. This has appeared to be, in the last couple of days, the issue that has been grabbed by the third party. I am glad to see that the leader of the second party is looking at it more seriously now.

I can tell the members what the honourable gentleman should advise that particular person who was watching his television set on the evening of September 7, 1987. I should tell him that this party has moved forward to eliminate the discrimination with respect to insurance rates based on age, sex, marital status or handicap, as we had indicated.

We have moved with dispatch to deal with capping those rates earlier. We have moved with dispatch to have the auto board take over the duty of demystifying the market with respect to what is required to put rates together. He should also advise that particular person to—

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** Just think how happy they are after they get this increase.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, the member for Windsor-Riverside (Mr. D. S. Cooke).

**Hon. Mr. Elston:** Basically, to finish off, the Leader of the Opposition should also advise that member that this is a proposal based on several assumptions and indications which, in the report, point out that there are some areas of data which must be clarified and otherwise. In fact, the chairman of the board will be, with his board members, examining this proposal in conjunction with representatives of the public and industry in a very thorough manner to deal with the assumptions and the basis upon which the recommendations have been put before the board.

**Mr. B. Rae:** Mr. Mercer's proposal is not that of some guy off the street who said he thought he had a good idea. This proposal is the one that was asked for specifically by the auto insurance board to guide its discussions, so the minister cannot say it is just a proposal. It is not just a proposal. It is the one proposal that provides the framework for the entire discussion at the board, and the

minister knows that. He knows that perfectly well.

I would like to ask the minister this specific question: When that 30-year-old driver heard the Premier say, “We have a very specific plan to lower auto insurance rates,” how was he supposed to know that the Premier was not talking about him?

**Hon. Mr. Elston:** First, I have to advise the 30-year-old driver who has been singled out as an example by the Leader of the Opposition that the leader is wrong when he says this is the basis upon which the hearing will be held. In fact, what will be dealt with here is this proposal in conjunction with the decisions that have been rendered in respect of all of the other parts of the hearing. This is a four-part hearing which has built constructively upon the basis of discussions earlier on. There are parts of the decisions rendered earlier that have been used to provide some of the assumptions, but this is not the entire basis upon which the hearing will be based.

This is a good part of it. This is a consultant's report. The consultant was hired by the board; I agree with that. But the member will also want to be fully up front with the people of the province—Mr. Speaker, I am sure the leader would say—by indicating that this is not the entire basis upon which the hearing will be held but that it is, I agree, a very important component of it. It does point out certain problems with respect to data and other things, and I know that Mr. Kruger, the chairman of the board about which the leader spoke as well, has indicated that there will be a very rigorous examination of the basis upon which these recommendations were brought forward.

I can tell the people of this province that there will be a very thorough and full analysis and a very public analysis, so that—

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you.

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. B. Rae:** When a political leader says he has a specific plan to lower rates, that sounds to me like a promise to lower rates. When an insurance board appointed by his government awards an increase of return on investment of some 12.5 per cent—which, in terms of existing premiums, means an increase in premium income alone of some \$1.2 billion—as one of the other foundations of the discussions that are going to be going ahead in the next few days, along with the Mercer report, it sounds to me as if the government of Ontario and the Liberal Party



of Ontario all along had a plan in mind not to lower rates but to send insurance rates through the roof.

That was the plan they had in mind before the election. That was the plan they had in mind during the election, only they did not have the forthrightness to tell the people of the province about it. In fact, they told the people of the province the precise opposite when it came to insurance rates, when it came to profitability and when it came to anything else. That is what they did. The precise opposite of what they have done is what they promised during the election campaign.

**Mr. Speaker:** The question?

**Mr. B. Rae:** Specifically on the question of a return on equity, I wonder how the minister feels about a proposal not from Mr. Mercer but from the insurance board itself which says that, in addition to making a return on investment of some nearly 27 per cent in all other business, the insurance companies are now going to be allowed an increase from 3.25 per cent return on investment, not the loss they have been talking about, to some 12.5 per cent: a \$1.2-billion increase in their premium income.

**Hon. Mr. Elston:** As is not unusual with the Leader of the Opposition—I almost called him the leader of the third party; I did not want to provoke the leader of the third party by saying he was always unaware of the reality of the situation. In this case, the gentleman has not always put all of the material together so he can provide a cogent argument.

What he has indicated is that there is in some way—and he is trying to lead the people to believe incorrectly—a guarantee of 12.5 per cent on equity. That, of course, is not the situation. It becomes an assumption for the basis of setting a rate structure in place that can be talked about. There is no guarantee of return on equity. There is no guarantee of the 35 to 40 per cent which has been made here. There is no guarantee that, in fact, that will be happening.

I can tell the honourable gentleman that his allegation that this party had in mind that it would raise insurance rates through the ceiling, that it would do all those other things he incorrectly suggested it would do, is in fact a disservice to the people of this province.

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you.

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. Other members wish to ask questions. I will just wait. The Leader of the Opposition, new question.

## TEMAGAMI DISTRICT RESOURCES

**Mr. B. Rae:** I have a new question for the Premier. He will know that Chief Potts held a press conference at one o'clock this afternoon and, in a very eloquent letter to Mr. Feilders, who is the negotiator for the government, he quotes a comment made in 1939 by the Deputy Minister of Lands and Forests, under a then Liberal government, I might point out.

The deputy minister said: "In the first place this department cannot consent to disposing of any portions of the township of Vogt in this way. The township is altogether too valuable from a timber point of view to even consider the question."

Chief Potts then goes to say: "Nothing appears to have changed, except that in 1939 there was a lot of forest. Now there is only a little left and this is what your government wishes to destroy."

I wonder what the Premier has to say in response to this comment by Chief Potts with respect to the clear implication of the government's decision to seek an injunction, with his clear indication that he is going to allow for the continuation of clear-cutting in the area, that there is going to be a continuation of the destruction of the land that is the ancestral home of Chief Potts and his band. What is his response to Chief Potts?

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** A great deal has intervened since 1939, particularly from this government. As the honourable member knows, an offer was made with respect to a settlement in this area, not only land but money as well. That was put forward in good faith. The Attorney General (Mr. Scott) will help me if I am wrong, but I believe the first bona fide offer ever made by this government was put forward and was turned down.

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As the member knows, it has gone to court, and the court ruled against the Indian claim, but we stand prepared to sit and negotiate and continue to try to come up with a settlement of this matter. I can say to the member in as good a faith as I possibly can that we have tried to negotiate with the band; we have made that offer in good faith and we have sat down and talked about shared jurisdiction with respect to resource management in that area. The band turned down various proposals that were put forward, and we are still prepared to sit down and try to work this matter out.

I believe we have exercised good faith, patience and goodwill and we will continue to do

so in this matter. But at some point or other one comes to the determination of whether the talks are at an impasse, and it was our judgement—and I believe theirs, because virtually they walked away—that we could not proceed any further.

**Mr. B. Rae:** First of all, with respect to walking away, I think that is a very unfair characterization of Chief Potts's position, a very unfair characterization of the position he described today and one which I am sure the Premier himself would want to reflect on.

One of the things the chief has to say is that he no longer can have any faith and he does not believe his band can either with respect to the Attorney General, who has a clear conflict of interest in this regard in that he represents two very different approaches. One is as the minister responsible for native affairs who has to sit down and negotiate in good faith a settlement with the native people, and the other is as the Attorney General who is, prior to the Court of Appeal even considering the appeal of Chief Potts and his band, asking the court to allow the government of Ontario to act unilaterally and allow logging in the area, which is specifically the area under contention, specifically the area under review and specifically the area that Chief Potts and his band want to protect.

Does the Premier not think it is time he settles in his own mind what it is he wants the Attorney General to do, to negotiate in good faith with the native people or to go ahead and simply clear them off the road and let the loggers go through and preclude any discussion—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. The question has been asked.

**Mr. B. Rae:** —of a land claim at all, which is precisely the effect the action will have?

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** To respond both to the member and to Chief Potts in this regard: I say to the member in all sincerity that I do not know anybody in Canada who is more dedicated to the cause of our native people than the Attorney General; he comes to this government second to none in this country. This has been a lifelong passion of his. He has put forward a land claim. This was the intellectual leader across this nation when it came to discussing aboriginal self-government, who was working hard to bring other governments across this nation to put their minds to that question of constitutional reform.

I would say that without question he represents a position of integrity and has great ability and great commitment on this matter, and I say to him and I say to the member, that the native people are very lucky to have someone of this ability and

this judgement charged with the responsibility of looking after their affairs.

**Mr. B. Rae:** There might have been a time when what the Premier said was true; that time is certainly not now with respect to the actions of the Attorney General.

If seeking a court injunction before the Court of Appeal has determined the question of the land claim—a court injunction which, if successful, will in effect preclude the settlement of the claim and grant the logging companies the unilateral right to territory which is now under dispute—is doing something in defence of the native people of the province, that is a very different definition from the one I have and indeed a very different definition from the one Chief Potts and the native community as a whole across the province have.

In the light of the fact that Chief Potts has indicated today that the band is going to be asking the Court of Appeal to delay the question of any injunction until such time as the court's decision is made, does the Premier not think that the very least he can do is to delay the application for the injunction until such time as the Court of Appeal makes its decision with respect to this land claim?

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** My honourable friend, I think, forgets a number of the facts at issue here. First of all, a land claim offer was made in good faith, both money and land. It was turned down by the band and, as I understand it, the band did not want to negotiate pending the appeal.

**Mr. B. Rae:** What is this? Is the government saying just take it or leave it?

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** We never say take it or leave it. We said it and the band has refused to negotiate because it wanted to wait for the appeal. This has already gone through a trial, one of the longest trials in the history of this province, and it was found against the band. They have every right to appeal that to the Ontario Court of Appeal and after that the Supreme Court of Canada, and we can take another five, six or seven years.

I gather the position of my honourable friend opposite is to do absolutely nothing and wait for the court for the next five, six, or seven years or whatever it is in that regard. We have offered—

**Mr. B. Rae:** I am saying to respect people's legal rights and not to preclude those rights.

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** We have offered methods of joint management of the resources. We have offered to bring them into the discussion. They have chosen not to accept that. We have not moved unilaterally. We are asking for



the advice of the courts in this matter and they will pronounce on it.

I think our position has been reasonable. We have been patient. We have taken a great deal of time on this. We have not done as the Tories and moved in the howitzers, by any stretch of the imagination. I believe our position is fair and supportable in the circumstances.

My friend may have us do nothing, but I think that we have moved and will continue to move and sit down any time to try to resolve this question. The honourable member now understands the complexity of the question, but I believe that our approach has been fair to all sides and we have demonstrated good faith and we will continue to do so.

#### AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

**Mr. Brandt:** My question is to the Premier, and speaking of moving in howitzers on insurance, there will be many people in this province who will aim their howitzers in the Premier's direction coming off the recent statements that he made prior to the last provincial election.

On September 7, the Premier indicated very clearly—I have been trying to interpret his comments as specifically as I can, and I will quote him: "We have a very specific plan to lower insurance rates." When the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. B. Rae) quoted that particular statement in the House a few moments ago, I say to the first minister, a member of his party to my left indicated, "Well, some rates will be lowered."

I looked again at the statement. It says, "We have a very specific plan to lower insurance rates." Not just some rates, but insurance rates generally. I think the Premier has a responsibility to the people of Ontario to indicate what he meant by a "specific plan." Is he prepared to back up the claim he made, three days prior to the last provincial election, that he was going to lower insurance rates?

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** The member sees in place a regulatory authority. He sees a variety of reports that have been put forward. They have not been adopted. At the time when they come forward with their independent recommendations, then he can form his own judgements on that. We think that plan, in the long term, will alleviate the situation and take some of the pressure off.

**Mr. Brandt:** I say with respect to the Premier, if his plan was to incorporate some form of a review function with the regulatory Ontario Automobile Insurance Board which he now has

in place, that is fine. Whatever the Premier wants to put in place with respect to his specific plan is all I am asking for in terms of some kind of expansion or clarification of what he meant on September 7. What the Premier very clearly said at that time is that he had a plan. I am not arguing the plan. I am arguing the net result, which is the lowering of insurance rates. How does he intend to do it?

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** As the member knows, there is no price that can be held lower in perpetuity. I assume that the member would understand that. But I think that this board is going to provide independent advice and counsel on that matter. Why does the member not attend the result?

**Mr. Pope:** Your nose is growing.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Brandt:** I have to tell the Premier that the perpetuity he is talking about lasted less than a few months. Rates have already gone up by about nine per cent over the past 12-month period. We have had broken promises on free trade; we have had broken promises on Sunday shopping; we have had broken promises on affordable housing, and now we have another broken promise on auto insurance.

Let me remind the Premier that what he said was, "We have a very specific plan to lower insurance rates." Further to that, on the same date he said, and I want to quote him accurately, "The point is, if you aspire to govern, you've got to be credible and base things you say on accurate information, not just wishes and theories."

1420

What accurate information did the Premier have on September 7 which indicated that he could stand before the public of Ontario and indicate that he was prepared to lower insurance rates? Will he share that information with the House now?

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** One of the things we have done is move to develop a credible database, which we did not have before. The member will remember the debates in this House on all sides. People were saying they were making too much, the socialists have this view. The member says they are not making enough in that regard. That will all be there for everyone to see with an independent board. They are looking for advice from a variety of consultants. They will look at the information and come to their own conclusions.

The member will be able to come and challenge that. He can say it is too much or too

little, and so can members opposite. I believe it is a way to take pressure off the rates, which we were seeing rise very dramatically. I think it is a credible solution to the problem.

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** What was your promise on this one? Is there any major promise you have made that you have lived up to: insurance, free trade, Sunday shopping?

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. The member for Windsor-Riverside is wasting the time of the House.

**Mr. Mackenzie:** The bigger the lie, the easier to sell. Very apropos.

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** That ought to lift the level of debate in the House.

**Mr. Speaker:** If you wish to waste the time, I do not mind waiting here.

**Mr. Runciman:** My question is to the Premier as well, on the same line of questioning. Hopefully, we will get some meaningful answers this time.

As my leader indicated, the Premier stated in September 1987, during the election campaign, that he had a very specific plan to lower insurance rates. But lo and behold, the Mercer report tabled yesterday suggests that some drivers could pay as much as 142 per cent more for auto insurance. As the Premier might not appreciate, most drivers cannot afford a 142 per cent increase in premiums.

It seems blatantly obvious that the Premier cannot honour his 1987 statement and at the same time permit the Mercer report to be implemented. He cannot have it both ways. Is the Premier prepared to stand in the House today and assure us that it will not be implemented?

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** As the member says, it is just a report that is in the hands of the auto insurance board and it will look at the matter. One of the things my honourable friend fails to point out is that we have taken the age and sex bias out of insurance rates.

The member used to stand here and say that single, young males were paying too much in insurance just because they happened to be single, young males. So there are new actuarial assumptions.

**Mr. Brandt:** No, because they had more accidents than women did.

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** Because they are single, young males. As a group they had perhaps more accidents, but just because they are single and male did not mean they did. They are using different actuarial assumptions to form these bases. If the member likes the old system, then he

should stand up and say so; if he wants to just let it run, then he should stand there and say so. But we wrought significant changes in this matter, and I think my honourable friend should await the outcome.

**Mr. Runciman:** There is something known as risk determination. I guess the Premier does not want to take that into consideration in breaking yet another promise to the voters of this province.

The Mercer report suggests that an 18-year old, single female principal driver with no claims, no convictions could end up paying 142 per cent more for auto insurance. That is about \$1,100 more than the \$800 she now pays. Does the Premier think a young woman earning \$15,000 or \$16,000 per year can afford to pay an extra \$1,100 in auto insurance premiums?

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** I do not think you can draw any assumptions at this point, but the whole point of the exercise is to base insurance on record, not on sexual stereotype or age. It is based on driving record. If my honourable friend disagrees with that principle, then he should please stand up and share it with us.

**Mr. Runciman:** Again, the Premier said in 1987 that he had a very specific plan to lower insurance rates. The new auto insurance system that this government has brought in will clearly result in some unaffordably high rate increases. The Mercer recommendations are clearly too much too soon.

Is the Premier prepared to turn rates that consumers cannot afford to pay into rates they can afford by accepting a recommendation from this party that rate increases be phased in over a seven-year period so that no one will have to give up driving because of this government's so-called rate review?

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** I appreciate the honourable member's advice in this matter. My friends in the official opposition would like to create a state-owned insurance company, and perhaps have the taxpayers subsidize that. My friends in the third party, I gather, do not care what the rates are, but now say the rates are going to go up and want to phase them in over a long period of time.

First of all, I think the member has to understand that the Mercer report is not government policy. It is like any other report around here. It is not government policy or—

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** I think my honourable friend should just be a little patient until they come with a final determination.



**Mr. B. Rae:** We now have the Tory plan, which is to increase rates seven years in a row, rather than just in one which is the Liberal plan.

**Mr. Speaker:** The question is to which minister?

**Mr. B. Rae:** I would like to ask the Premier—

**Mr. Ballinger:** What is your plan?

**Mr. B. Rae:** My plan is the one we put before the people of Ontario in the last election. That is the plan that we are in favour of, that will not have a 12.5 per cent profit rate for insurance companies which are now making 3.5 per cent, which is what the Premier was proposing.

I would like to ask the Premier what he had in mind for the people of this province—

Interjections.

**Mr. R. F. Johnston:** Manitoba is 33 per cent lower than we are now.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. The member for Scarborough West does not have the floor.

**Hon. Mr. Scott:** He is heckling his own leader. Johnston and Rae are having a leadership review. They should both be leaders.

**Mr. Pope:** Stop the clock. They are talking to each other.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. Supplementary, the Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. B. Rae:** I simply want to put to the Premier a very simple question. He made a statement to the people in Cambridge on September 7. He said that he had a specific plan to lower insurance rates. He did not set out one driver, he did not say it was for young male drivers and he did not set out a category of drivers; he set out a general plan for the people of the province in response to our plan, because in the same statement, he said that our plan was no good and he had a better plan that he could tell the people of the province was in fact going to reduce their insurance rates.

Was the Premier telling the truth when he made that statement? If he was, can he tell us what was in that plan? Because it certainly is not what the government has been doing since the election on September 10, 1987, when rates have gone up and up and up and up.

**Hon. Mr. Peterson:** Can I ask my friend whether he was telling the truth when he discussed the problems with the Manitoba plan or the problems with the British Columbia plan, the one that he pitched to be nirvana. Did he talk about the great rate increases and how his friends got thrown out of government because they manipulated that situation politically? Can he tell

the truth in that particular matter? If he wants to ask that kind of question, I can ask him that kind of question back.

We are bringing air into this matter. We are bringing the public examination of this matter. He will be able to make his own judgements in that particular regard.

I know my friend's ideological determination to have a state-run system in that regard, but I do not think there is any evidence that it would deliver any cheaper product to the people of this province. We want to make sure we have a fair system, as cheap as is reasonable, and we also said we want to take the age and sex bias out of the situation.

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** That was called a re-election plan.

**Mr. Mackenzie:** The bigger the lie, the easier it is to get away with it.

Interjections.

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** Do you think they are directed at you? You are all full of guilt about it.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

1430

## HOME CARE

**Mr. Eves:** I have a question of the Minister of Health. She has been saying for some time now that the future of health care lies in more community-based health care. She said to us just last week that beds no longer are the benchmark of health care in Ontario.

We now find out that we have the Red Cross, one of the world's most respected organizations, starting to have to close down its homemaker operations across the province, as of January 21, because of her and her government's refusal to respond to its needs. This is what I would call a lack of commitment to community-based health care. Where is the minister's commitment to community-based health care and why will her government not put its money where its mouth is?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** I think it is important that the facts be known. When we talk about the home care program over the past five years, there has been an increase from some \$67 million to \$200 million. We have acknowledged that this program has experienced a number of growing pains as it has grown. We have had an operational review undertaken of the entire home care program. Both the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Community and Social Services are very concerned that we deliver the kind of home support services to people that will help them

remain in the community for as long as possible in a fiscally responsible manner.

**Mr. Eves:** The interministerial committee on visiting homemakers, which her ministry participated in, finished its report in November 1987, yet her government sat on that report and did not make it public until June 1988; that is, from November 1987 to June 1988. We are now in December 1988, some 13 months later.

There are 28 specific recommendations in that interministerial report. How many of those 28 has the minister implemented? Exactly what has she done with each one of those 28? When is she going to start following the recommendations of her own interministerial report? When is she going to implement them?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** The member opposite displays a lack of real understanding of the expansion of home care and of the intricacies. In fact, his question is really a question for Orders and Notices. We had an opportunity to discuss home care through estimates. He declined to ask even one question at that time. We are committed to the expansion of home care.

We recognize there are many, many problems. I can tell the member that there are 38 home care programs across the province, that the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Community and Social Services are working very closely together and that we have undertaken an operational review, to determine how we can provide the home care support services in an appropriate manner in the future, be they social home support services or medical home support services.

#### ACID RAIN

**Ms. Collins:** My question is for the Minister of the Environment. In view of the fact that our American friends—at least the present administration—have not been convinced of the need for immediate action on reducing acid rain, what new evidence can Canadians use to prompt action by the new American administration or by the United States Congress?

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** The evidence is rather convincing at the present time in terms of its effect, for instance, on the lakes here in Ontario. We have documented evidence of the fact that it has rendered a number of lakes relatively useless in terms of the aquatic life that is there. That could be said of any place in Canada where it is landing.

We also have evidence that there is damage to forests, to the maple trees, particularly in Quebec where people have brought that to the attention of the American authorities. We know of damage to

buildings. Even this building is eroded by acid rain. One thing I think is somewhat compelling that has been left out of the argument for a long period of time, particularly south of the border, although we are seeing some of it utilized now, is the evidence that there is an effect on human health.

I think Ontario Hydro commissioned a report here. There are other reports. Dr. Bates of the University of British Columbia has come forward with a good deal of evidence about acid rain, which is caused, of course, by burning fossil fuel, by the coal plants that are in the United States and in Canada. With this kind of evidence, we think there is a compelling reason for the reduction of acid rain on the American side of the border and we intend to continue to pursue that.

**Ms. Collins:** If this information is known and available, how can governments on our side of the border bring the message to those who have the levers of power in the United States, particularly when we know we have so many allies on this issue in that country?

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** Another part of this is that it is indeed true there are a number of allies who are largely people from environmental groups, but also people within the Congress of the United States, who have in fact been promoting this kind of legislation.

What I have proposed recently to our friends on the American side of the border, I think with the support of Canadian and American environmental groups and those in Congress who are concerned about this issue, is that a seminar be held in Washington, DC, itself where the availability of senators, congressmen, their staffers and members of the administration is quite evident, and that we invite Dr. Bates of the University of British Columbia to attend to demonstrate clearly to those who have the levers of power in the United States Congress that there is a marked effect on human health in terms of admissions to hospital with respiratory disease when there is an increase in sulphur dioxide, which is a precursor, of course, to the acid rain itself.

I think this will prove to be highly successful. I know it will be supported by groups such as Energy Probe, the Canadian Coalition on Acid Rain and others on this side of the border who see this as a positive step. What is really going to convince our American friends is the effect on human health.

#### PROGRAM FUNDING

**Mrs. Grier:** My question is for the Minister of Community and Social Services. It concerns yet



another worthwhile program that is foundering because of lack of support from this government.

I would like the minister to know that on October 20, 1988, the provincial court ordered that Andrew Paul McLeod have supervised access to his five-year-old daughter every second Saturday between 9 a.m. and 12 p.m. Mr. McLeod has not seen his daughter since he and his wife separated last January because of the mistrust and hostility between the couple. Before the family court judge, the family and its lawyers agreed that Mr. McLeod could visit with his daughter at a program called Access for Parents and Children, with which the minister is familiar and which is in my riding of Etobicoke-Lakeshore.

However, because of the refusal of the minister to fund this program, Access could not accommodate the McLeod family and the lawyers have been unable to find any other supervised program for this child anywhere else in Metro. Can the minister please give me an explanation that I can then give to the McLeod family as to why it is going to be unable to have a family time together under some neutral supervision?

**Hon. Mr. Sweeney:** The honourable member raised this question with me, I believe it was on October 27. I clearly indicated to her that our ministry had never funded this program and had no funds to accommodate it at the present time. She will be well aware of the fact that I did indicate I would review the funding availability in that area office to see whether any money could be found. I have since written both to her and Mr. Leonard, the executive director of Lakeshore Area Multi-Service Project, indicating that I cannot find those funds and that my ministry is not able to fund it.

A court order is something that has to be enforced by the court. My ministry cannot accept the responsibility for that. The member is also aware of the fact that there is a co-ordinated effort between the Attorney General (Mr. Scott) and myself to run a pilot program to try to find ways to accommodate these kinds of court orders, but at the present time I do not have the funds to pay for that program.

**Mrs. Grier:** The minister is quite right. This program has been running on voluntary funding since 1981. But the minister may also be interested to know that on November 15, the United Way of Greater Toronto turned down an application for funding by the program because, as it said, "90 per cent of the agency's clients are court-referred." Is it not reasonable that the

Attorney General and this minister should work out a funding mechanism for what is clearly an important provincially directed program?

Since October there have been 36 cases turned down by Access. Twenty-seven of these were ordered by the courts and one of them was directed to the program by the Ministry of Community and Social Services. How can the minister refuse to accept responsibility, refuse to acknowledge the value of the program and refuse to keep the program alive, at least servicing the clients who are referred to it in Metropolitan Toronto even if he is not prepared to extend the program across the rest of the province?

**1440**

**Hon. Mr. Sweeney:** Contrary to what the honourable member just indicated, I have not at any time said this is not a valuable and needed service. I have simply said that like many other valuable and needed services, I do not have the money to fund it.

Part of the difficulty I have is that when the honourable member raised this question with me the last time—as I said, I believe it was on October 27—she indicated that the amount of money required by Access was \$34,000. I believe that is in Hansard. I understand that at a news conference today, Access said what it needed from my ministry was \$85,000. That is more than double. I certainly do not have that amount of money either. If the cost keeps increasing at that rate, quite frankly, I will never have that amount of money.

#### AIR AMBULANCE SERVICES

**Mr. Pope:** My question is for the Minister of Health, the same minister who is presiding over the discontinuance of the homemakers' service and the needless conflict with the Red Cross, for which she should be ashamed.

My question to the Minister of Health is with respect to the air ambulance service. In Timmins, we still do not have a dedicated jet aircraft in use; the dedicated jet aircraft is in the hanger. We still have no apparent transition provisions to maintain the availability and quality of service of the jet air ambulance for the people of northeastern Ontario. Since the Chapleau accident a week ago, who has operated the air ambulance service in Timmins?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** The member's categorization is inaccurate on just about every count. There is a public inquiry, in fact two of them, that are being conducted right now, one by the Canadian Aviation Safety Board. I think many of the questions that have been raised will be

answered in that forum. As well, we know that the coroner's office has called an inquest and there will be an opportunity there as well.

I can tell the member that Ministry of Health officials attended the funerals of the two very experienced pilots, and their families are experiencing the kind of pain and anxiety that the member's kind of question can only exacerbate. I am ashamed to be in the House where such a question would be asked.

**Mr. Pope:** For all the minister's moralizing, we are ashamed of her performance as Minister of Health, protecting the people of the province of Ontario. You ought to be ashamed of yourself, minister, no one else; yourself.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. I have reminded many members on previous occasions that if they wish to point, they can point at the Speaker and direct their questions through the Speaker.

**Mr. Pope:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think it is important for the people to understand that the minister did not answer the question with respect to who was operating the air ambulance system in Timmins for the past week.

On Friday night, Tom Morrish had an accident in his home and severed part of his hand, including his thumb. He was brought to St. Mary's General Hospital at approximately 8:30 p.m. The doctor in charge at St. Mary's General Hospital asked for an air ambulance to transfer the person to Toronto to have his hand reattached and was told, which was passed on to the patient, that the service had been discontinued. It was three and a half hours before an air ambulance arrived in Timmins to transport that patient to Toronto.

That is the system the minister put in place. She is negligent and incompetent and should resign.

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** Does the member have a question?

**Mr. Speaker:** I do not believe I heard a question.

#### COMMUNITY SAFETY

**Mr. Faubert:** My question is for the Solicitor General. The minister will be aware of a much publicized skirmish that took place in the Scarborough Town Centre in August. Reports on this occurrence were diverse and contradictory, and the ensuing press that resulted raised concerns in the community about what is perceived to be an increase in youth gang activity.

In the recent municipal elections and in my day-to-day communication with my constituents, I have noticed that concern about safety and security in the community has been growing. Recent events throughout Metropolitan Toronto, including reports of disturbances and confrontations between high school students and youth gangs, among other outbreaks of seemingly spontaneous vandalism and looting, have further raised community concern. Can the minister advise this House what is currently being done to deal with this most unfortunate problem.

**Hon. Mrs. Smith:** The member for Scarborough-Ellesmere will be interested to know that Metropolitan Toronto police have indeed been keeping a close tab on these gatherings of young people, which as the member mentions, have a tendency to alarm people about their general safety. In fact, as far as can be determined, these seem to be more spontaneous incidents that arise out of certain given circumstances rather than any organized gang activities.

The reported incident in Scarborough was the result of a great many young people gathering to get into a movie theatre where the rates were cut in half. These incidents will occur and the police are doing everything possible to be always on top of such incidents. They take seriously the possibility of gang incidents, but have seen no indication that would let them believe this is happening in Metro Toronto.

**Mr. Faubert:** I thank the minister for her answer, and I am sure it will be reassuring to my constituents. By way of supplementary, can the minister advise this House if she feels there is a need for a Metropolitan Toronto-wide review of this alleged gang activity?

**Hon. Mrs. Smith:** As I indicated, the Metro Toronto police believe that it is alleged rather than real, that gang activity is not occurring here among the young people. However, in this area, and in the area of young people and drugs, they are being very vigilant. I recommend to the member that he take his concern to the new Metropolitan Toronto council, which I am sure will be interested in addressing it on his behalf. In my ministry, I do not get directly involved in these matters unless there is some reason to believe it is not being dealt with properly by the local authorities.

#### ACCESS TO CHILDREN IN CUSTODY

**Mr. Hampton:** My question is for the Attorney General. The Attorney General has before the House Bill 124, his access enforce-



ment legislation. The Attorney General knows that the Canadian Bar Association, in its submissions on the bill, said that there are some access enforcement problems but that the bill may create problems that did not exist heretofore. For example, there will undoubtedly be more litigation as a result of the bill.

Can the Attorney General tell us why he is committed to an access enforcement bill that will increase litigation and increase conflict? Instead, why will the Attorney General not fund the kind of program the member for Etobicoke-Lakeshore (Mrs. Grier) has referred to, an access agency that provides a mechanism so that divorced and separated parents can exercise access meaningfully rather than fight about it in court?

**Hon. Mr. Scott:** I do not accept the general proposition that this bill will increase litigation. The reality is that access orders are already made in divorce proceedings or in custody cases, or access provisions are found in separation agreements. The simple purpose of this bill is to develop a way for the court to effectively arbitrate disputed access occasions.

**Mr. Hampton:** That fundamentally illustrates the misguided nature of this bill. If the Attorney General had taken the time today to come and listen to some of the parents who have to deal with the legislation and who will have to deal with his proposed legislation, he would have heard them say: "Do not give us more legislation. Do not put us back in the courts. Fund an access agency so we can meaningfully exercise access. We do not want to fight about it. We do not want another piece of legislation."

Why will the Ministry of the Attorney General not fund this kind of access agency that allows parents to exercise access instead of fighting about it in court?

1450

**Hon. Mr. Scott:** I take it from what the honourable member says that he is anxious to participate in a debate on this bill, which I think would be useful. I look to him to honour his party's obligation to see to it, and this is expressed in writing, that this bill is debated this session. Then we can decide what the appropriate response is.

I want to bring to the honourable member's attention the fact that the Minister of Community and Social Services (Mr. Sweeney) is already funding a pilot project to determine whether access referral systems of the type to which he refers are useful and whether, as a program, this kind of referral system should be carried,

obviously at very great expense, to every town and city in the province.

The minister and I await the outcome of that pilot project in order to make the appropriate determination.

### AFFORDABLE HOUSING

**Mr. Harris:** I have a question to the Minister of Housing. Last October, when I first raised the question of lot levies, the minister told me: "The honourable member will be pleased to know that the Ministry of Municipal Affairs has been conducting, along with the Association of Municipalities of Ontario and some representatives of the industry, an inquiry into the whole question of lot levies and how they are to be handled. He will be hearing the results of those discussions very soon. I believe those will be much more helpful for the whole question of affordable home ownership than they have been in the past."

That was the response to my question in October. Now we see what the results of those discussions were.

**Mr. Speaker:** Do you have a question?

**Mr. Harris:** My question is this: Could the minister stand in her place today and tell the people of Ontario how adding even one single dollar, let alone \$8,000 to \$10,000 to the cost of every new home built in this province is going to be helpful to the cause of affordable housing?

**Hon. Ms. Hošek:** I would like to refer that to the Treasurer.

**Hon. R. F. Nixon:** I appreciate the confidence that the honourable member has in me and I think it is quite appropriate that she refer it to me. I think also that her answer yesterday to this House was quite appropriate, that there are many areas in which we want to improve our ability to provide service to the municipalities and to the people who are under consideration, but until the time comes when we can announce government policy, it really is not appropriate for me to give any particular, specific answer to the honourable member.

**Mr. Harris:** I find it interesting that the Minister of Housing wants to refer affordable housing questions to the Treasurer.

Let me, by way of a supplementary, indicate to the Treasurer that last May, in response to a question from my colleague the member for Burlington South (Mr. Jackson), the Minister of Housing referred to a meeting that she and the Premier (Mr. Peterson) had with regional municipalities. She said that that meeting had focused

on a variety of things that "...could make a significant impact in the provision of housing that was affordable."

She went on and said, "...we are moving very swiftly in the right direction together." Now we find out what the Treasurer and what the Premier had in mind as the right direction for affordability—stick it to them with another \$8,000 to \$10,000.

I would ask the Treasurer, if the Minister of Housing loses this battle—and it appears as though she is all by herself with the exception of me in fighting it—will he suggest to her that she reflect on her words when she fired John Sewell? Those words were, "It is time for someone else to have a turn."

**Hon. R. F. Nixon:** I can only say what I have already said, that the policy of the government is to provide adequate housing for all parts of the province at an affordable price, that we want to assist municipalities in their responsibilities not only to develop housing but also to provide education and the infrastructure that is necessary as our modern community expands.

I would expect that the honourable member and his colleagues would be enthusiastic as we approach new, fair, equitable and imaginative ways to see that this responsibility is fulfilled.

#### RETAIL STORE HOURS

**Mr. Offer:** My question is to the Minister of Labour. It refers basically to an article which was in a newspaper today and certainly with respect to certain inquiries that I have had at my constituency office.

"The Retail Council of Canada says that, legally, Boxing Day sales should be held on Tuesday, December 27, because most employees are entitled to Monday, December 26, off because Christmas Day falls on a Sunday."

It goes on to state, "...If past experience holds true, many stores will open on Monday, December 26, essentially leaving employees without two days off for Christmas and Boxing Day."

My question to the minister is: On the basis of Christmas Day falling on the Sunday and Monday, December 26, being Boxing Day, what are the rights and what is the worker entitled to this year?

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** I want to thank the member for the question and just advise him that under the current law, the Retail Business Holidays Act, Boxing Day is a holiday under that act. But there is a lack of congruity between that act and the Employment Standards Act, so that currently, under the Employment Standards Act,

Boxing Day, December 26, is not a holiday. Bill 114, which is still in committee as I understand it, does make Boxing Day a holiday under the Employment Standards Act. Under those circumstances, it would give rise to a paid holiday for all workers in Ontario.

**Mr. Offer:** On the basis of Christmas Day being on December 25 and Boxing Day on the Monday, are workers obligated to work on the Monday, Boxing Day, in this province?

**Hon. Mr. Sorbara:** It is an interesting, and really important question as well, because I want to point out that under the Retail Business Holidays Act as it currently stands, Boxing Day requires most stores in the province to be closed. This Legislature passed Bill 51 several months ago and that gives an absolute right to workers to refuse to work in a premise that cannot be open under the Retail Business Holidays Act, so to the extent that a store does not have permission to open, no worker is obviously required and cannot be disciplined for not working on that day in that sort of store.

#### ASSISTIVE DEVICES PROGRAM

**Mr. R. F. Johnston:** My question is to the Minister of Health. It concerns Bob McLaren, a musician who lives in my riding who had a leg amputated in 1952, the first child to be fitted with a limb at Sunnybrook Medical Centre after the war vets. He has been paying the full cost of his artificial legs for 36 years. He therefore hoped that when the new extension of the assistive devices program came through in July 1986 that he would be eligible for some assistance.

Unfortunately, the then minister, the member for Bruce (Mr. Elston), said that he had taken delivery of his definitive Symes prosthesis on February 20, 1986, preceding that date, and therefore would not be eligible for assistance. In fact, he did not receive his final leg, if I can put it that way, until March 1987. He has now had a collection agency chasing him for the remaining money.

May I say to the minister in the spirit of Jacob Marley: "Ebenezer, please free up some money to protect people like this and give them the assistance they deserve"?

**Hon. Mrs. Caplan:** In fact, we have made great strides in expanding the assistive devices program. I am not familiar with the individual case the member mentions and would be pleased to receive a copy of the documentation he has to investigate that, as there seems to be some discrepancy regarding dates.



Recently, coverage has extended to prostheses and ostomy supplies and mobility aids to residents of all ages and we are anticipating further expansion. In fact, it is one of the concerns we have because the program is experiencing some growing pains. We are finding it is a very important program. However, one of the things we are attempting to do as we expand that program is to make sure that we do it appropriately so that people have access to the appropriate devices, and I have been seeking advice from the Assistive Devices Advisory Committee, as the member knows.

## PETITIONS

### USE OF LOTTERY PROFITS

**Mr. Adams:** I have a petition from 70 people residing in Peterborough and the surrounding area. It reads:

"We agree that Ontario lottery funds should be used to improve hospital and medical care."

### SCHOOL OPENING EXERCISES

**Mr. McLean:** I have a petition signed by 173 members of Faith Missionary Church.

"To the honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"We, the undersigned, are opposed to the use of multifaith prayers and readings in Simcoe County Board of Education schools."

I have signed that.

1500

**Mr. McLean:** I have a petition signed by 31 members of the Women's Missionary Society of Central Oro Presbyterian Church:

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor of the province of Ontario:

"It has come to our attention that it is no longer permissible to recite the Lord's Prayer as part of our classroom activities in Ontario public schools. As a Christian organization, we find it very disturbing that a minority group is able to control the actions of the majority.

"We, the undersigned beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

We ask that the reciting of the Lord's Prayer be reinstated in our public school system."

### TAX INCREASES

**Mr. McLean:** I have another one. I am pleased to table a petition to the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, signed by approximately 100

residents of Ontario, objecting to the tax increases imposed by the Peterson government.

### TEACHERS' SUPERANNUATION FUND

**Mr. D. W. Smith:** I have a petition:

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"To amend the Teachers' Superannuation Act, 1983, in order that all teachers who retired prior to May 31, 1982, have their pensions recalculated on the best five years rather than at the present seven or 10 years.

"The proposed amendment would make the five-year criteria applicable to all retired teachers and would eliminate the present inequitable treatment."

This is signed by approximately 555 names, to which I have attached my name at the bottom, and these are primarily all working teachers.

### SCHOOL OPENING EXERCISES

**Mr. Cureatz:** I have a petition from 71 people from the city of Oshawa and surrounding area, that reads as follows:

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"To retain the Lord's Prayer in Ontario public schools."

### AMBULANCE SERVICES

**Mrs. Marland:** I have a petition:

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"This is a petition to the provincial government and the Ministry of Health to resume normal ambulance service in our community for our local citizens so that no one's life is endangered needlessly."

This addresses the area of Halton and Mississauga.

### TAX INCREASES

**Mr. Harris:** I am pleased to table a petition signed by approximately 100 residents of Ontario, objecting to the tax increases imposed by the Peterson government:

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"Bob Nixon, I demand you roll back the sales tax increase. This heartless imposition makes my dollar worth less at the store and in my payroll. You have effectively reduced my salary and I am mad about it."

I have affixed my signature to this.

### REPORT BY COMMITTEE

#### STANDING COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Laughren from the standing committee on resources development reported the following resolution:

That supply in the following amounts to defray the expenses of the Ministry of Natural Resources be granted to Her Majesty for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1989:

Ministry	administration	program,
\$75,429,400;	lands and water	program,
\$153,823,100;	outdoor recreation	program,
\$111,691,400;	resource products	program,
\$193,972,600;	resource experience	program,
\$7,612,300.		

### INTRODUCTION OF BILL

#### CITY OF SAULT STE. MARIE ACT

Mr. Morin-Strom moved first reading of Bill Pr75, An Act respecting the City of Sault Ste. Marie.

Motion agreed to.

#### MOTION TO SET ASIDE ORDINARY BUSINESS

Mr. Runciman moved that pursuant to standing order 37(a), the ordinary business of the House be set aside in order that the House may debate a matter of urgent public importance, that being recent reports indicating that drivers in Ontario will be faced with massive auto insurance premium increases as a result of the Liberal government's mismanagement and as a consequence of its failure to honour its commitment to introduce "a very specific plan to lower insurance rates" as promised by the Premier (Mr. Peterson) on September 7, 1987.

**Mr. Speaker:** Members have heard the motion by the member for Leeds-Grenville pursuant to standing order 37(a). Notice was received in time; therefore, I believe it to be in order. I will listen to the member for up to five minutes as well as representatives from other parties for that same length of time.

**Mr. Runciman:** I do not think there is any question that this is indeed a matter of urgent public importance. The news reports and the

comments in this House yesterday and today clearly indicate that consumers in this province could be faced with rate increases for their auto insurance in the order of an average of 35 per cent to 40 per cent. That is simply not palatable to the consumers of this province. We are hoping, through this debate, if the debate indeed is approved, to send out a very clear message to the government that action has to be taken.

I guess what we would like to see occur is a commitment on the part of the Premier to honour a pledge made during the 1987 election campaign that, as has been said on a number of occasions earlier today, he would introduce "a very specific plan to lower insurance rates."

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** How would he honour that—by doing it over seven years?

**Mr. Runciman:** I will get around to that.

Up to this day, up to this point we certainly have not seen anything that will follow through on the Premier's promise. He is obviously being very much inconsistent, which is not surprising. He cannot honour his commitment by simply allowing the Mercer report to go to the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board without comment or recommendations or some sort of input from the government, or he is unwilling to honour his commitment. Up to this point, he has not indicated any intention to intervene. We believe it is imperative that the government take action at this stage.

Obviously we believe, as I have said, he is being inconsistent and the government is being inconsistent. If they are going to stand by the statement, they have to ultimately reject the Mercer report. They simply cannot have it both ways. We are not going to allow that. We are talking about increases that could range up to 142 per cent.

I mentioned a case earlier today in respect to a single girl—I believe Markham was the location—who could be facing an increase of 142 per cent. The example given in the Mercer report is a 22-year-old girl, with no claims, no convictions and currently paying \$800, facing an increase in the magnitude of \$1,100. There does not seem to be any real recognition of the impact that these recommendations might have on consumers in the province. Individuals like this, people who are on modest incomes in many instances, having to come up with \$1,100 in increased auto insurance fees is simply out of the question. Many people are simply going to have to give up driving, and we do not believe that is acceptable.

At the other end of the spectrum, we can talk about the impact this is going to have on seniors



as well. An example brought forward in the Mercer report is a 66-year-old principal driver who has been driving for 40 years with no claims or convictions for six years, pleasure driving only, and the rate goes from \$765 annually to a little over \$1,000, a 32 per cent increase. This is obviously not acceptable. People cannot be expected to pay these kinds of increases, especially in a one-year period.

Any changes have to be done on a fair and reasonable basis. Now that we know the kinds of costs that are coming out of this government initiative, we have to fix it, even if it means new hearings. We are prepared to support new hearings. We cannot have these kinds of impossible increases foisted on the consumers of this province, forcing people with unblemished records to give up driving.

#### 1510

When we talked about Bill 2 last year and early this year, there was no question that severe dislocation was going to result from the changes with respect to the rate classification. We were criticized earlier when we suggested that perhaps we should be looking at phasing in. I suggest that my party is trying to recognize the reality of this Legislature. We are in a majority situation. It is one thing to continue to stand up and spout the party line, whether it be a government-run program or what have you, but I think we also have to do things and suggest things that are productive and can benefit the consumers of this province.

**Mr. B. Rae:** Mr. Speaker, I want to simply say to the House and to you, sir, that in the course of the debate on Bill 2, dealing with the establishment of the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board, we told you and the people of this province at second and third reading exactly what would happen.

We said that the insurance board would do two things. It would, first of all, create a classification scheme that would ensure increases for many drivers. The second thing we said—and I do not think this has been sufficiently understood by the House and appreciated by people as yet—was that the board would specifically increase the profit rates of insurance companies and thereby ensure that there will, in fact, be an increase in the rates for drivers. That would be an exponential rate that would be far higher than anything paid in the province before and would be a skyrocketing increase in comparison with anything we have experienced in the past. That is precisely what we said would happen, and now we see that is precisely what is happening.

The member who has just spoken did not indicate what the highest increase would be. I hope the Liberal members who campaigned in the last election under the banner of the leader of their party, who said he had a specific plan, will explain to the 22-year-old married male principal driver, licensed six years with driver training, and his 21-year-old spouse, who has been licensed three years with driver training, who have a 1985 Ford Escort GL, four-door, no other vehicle, pleasure use only, annual driving distance 20,000 kilometres, why they, if they were insured by company A as described in this report, would be expected to pay an increase of 189 per cent over what they were paying to their own insurance company.

We did not need regulation to get this kind of increase. We could have followed the practice of the Tories when they were in power and simply left the insurance companies to gobble up those kinds of dollars on their own, which is what they did between 1981 and 1985.

The whole purpose of the change that was promised by the Liberals before the election in 1987 and again by the Premier during the election was in order to get the rates down and under control. That was the entire purpose of public policy. That is why they appointed the Osborne committee. That is why they brought in the changes that were announced by the now Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Mr. Kwinter) at a press conference in April 1987. How well I remember it: "We are going to cap rates. We are going to do this, we are going to do that."

Then, in his response today, the Premier has the temerity to say that other provinces were guilty of a political manipulation of their rates. No leader and no politician in this country has been more guilty of wilfully politically manipulating insurance rates for his own political benefit than the Premier of this province, the leader of the Liberal Party of Ontario. No one in this country has been as guilty of specifically manipulating the rates, of freezing them at one point and then letting them rip after the election, as the Premier of this province.

He made a commitment to the people of this province that he had a plan to reduce rates. He said he had a specific plan to reduce rates. If the Premier was telling the truth when he made that statement, he has an obligation now to tell us what that plan was and why he did not put it into effect on September 10 and 11. He has an obligation to be straightforward with all of us in this House and say why what he is doing now is

the exact opposite of what he promised the people of this province during an election campaign.

The Premier thought that he could defuse the campaign for a better and fairer system by simply promising the people, in very general terms, that he had a better way. I am here to tell the members that he did not have a better way. I am here to tell the members that he did not have a better way during the election campaign, but he said that he did. I am here to tell the members that this party, his party, the Liberal Party of Ontario, will be judged accordingly for having very clearly and emphatically broken faith with the people of this province.

**Hon. Mr. Conway:** I might begin my remarks by simply asking the members to reflect upon what the very distinguished Leader of the Opposition (Mr. B. Rae) has said. I always enjoy the Leader of the Opposition in debate, but if I used the phrase "wilful manipulation," I would at least expect to be in breach of standing order 19 of this Legislature. I am not the Speaker, sir. I would ask you to reflect upon those words. I think, upon consideration, my friend the member for York South (Mr. B. Rae) would probably agree with me, but you are the referee and the arbiter and—

**Mr. B. Rae:** Not a chance.

**Hon. Mr. Conway:** All right. I would like your judgement, Mr. Speaker, because if I used language like that in this chamber, I would expect to be ruled out of order.

**Mr. B. Rae:** It is the kindest way I could put what I had to say.

**Mr. Wildman:** We are concerned about a breach with the people, not a breach of etiquette.

**Hon. Mr. Conway:** Well, I am interested to hear the opposition. I am somewhat surprised to have this resolution this afternoon from the member for Leeds-Grenville (Mr. Runciman). I admire the relative success by means of which he has stolen this issue away from the Leader of the Opposition. I have to give him some credit and some credit to his party leader who yesterday, with some stealth, in effect managed to pull this away from the official opposition.

I do not know what was going on in the New Democratic Party yesterday. There must have been an important conference, because it is not like the NDP members to allow someone so ideologically different from themselves as the member for Leeds-Grenville, with the help of his colleagues from places like Perth, Sterling and Mount Forest, to seize this issue from the New

Democrats; and now to have the member from Brockville, the member for Leeds-Grenville here today as the champion of this issue is itself quite a remarkable achievement.

You know, to listen to the New Democrats is to be reminded of what Stephen Lewis said to all of us who read Maclean's magazine. If members have not read this week's Maclean's magazine, they will want to read where Stephen Lewis says something like, "It's clearly the role of the NDP to agitate, not to govern." I have to say that with every day of listening to my friends in the official opposition—and they are hardworking, diligent, passionately ideological types, most of them—I have to agree that the former distinguished leader of the Ontario New Democratic Party is more likely right than wrong in this connection.

About their own moral rectitude, about their own consistency, I am always reminded, and I am reminded on an hourly basis as I see the New Democratic Party in western Canada, now that the federal election is over and I see them running from their well-established constitutional position, I say to my friend the member for Sault Ste. Marie (Mr. Morin-Strom), I do not know how disposed I ought to be to listen to them lecture me on the failings of human nature in other political parties.

**Mr. Laughren:** This has nothing to do with auto insurance.

1520

**Hon. Mr. Conway:** But the member for Nickel Belt (Mr. Laughren) is right: What does this have to do with this debate?

I just want to say that the government is quite happy to discuss the whole question of insurance. We had organized other business today. My friend the opposition House leader asks, "Are you going to allow this debate to proceed?" He and his friend the member for Nipissing (Mr. Harris) must surely know the answer to that. We have really no choice, and I am quite prepared to accede to the opposition on these matters.

I want to say that the opposition is discussing the Mercer report as though it were government policy. It is not government policy. It is a report that has been commissioned by an independent board, which board is going to take that report and have it clearly and carefully analysed and responded to by the public at large.

The Leader of the Opposition must not expect to be taken seriously, and he would not want the Legislature or the viewing audience to be under any wrong impression, that the Mercer report is government policy. It is not government policy.



The government policy is clear in this respect. We have established a process. We have moved very effectively in that connection to discharge our commitments, to meet our responsibilities. Unlike the opposition, we have made clear our position and we are quite prepared to entertain the debate in this Legislature and outside on the position that we have taken, because we think it is a good position and we think, as in the election, the public will, of course—

**Mr. Speaker:** Thank you.

Interjections.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. I have listened very carefully to the three members who have spoken, and I am sure that all members here have done the same. We now come to standing order 37(d). After all have listened carefully, I will put the question: Shall the debate proceed?

Agreed to.

**Mr. Speaker:** Then I will listen to any member who wishes to participate for up to 10 minutes, until the end of the debate or until the clock strikes six.

#### AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

**Mr. Runciman:** I want to respond quickly to a comment made by the government House leader and his feigning surprise that this party has taken the initiative with respect to concerns expressed about the Mercer report.

I want to say from the outset of this debate with respect to Bill 2 and the government's massive intervention in the private sector that this party has stood fast in the interest of the consumers of this province. We have expressed from the outset our concerns about what is going to happen, what the implications of Bill 2 would be to the consumers of this province, what the implications would be of this government's massive intervention into the private sector. We have been here front and centre, consistent in our position, our stand, our support for the consumers of this province. That is very consistent.

We want to talk about Bill 2 a bit, the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board. I want to remind members of the House of something I just said last week when the insurance board established a maximum 12.5 per cent profit level for companies providing auto insurance in the province. I responded by saying the announcement was not well received, but that should not be a surprise to the government, a government that forged ahead with this massive intervention in the private auto sector, apparently for, who knows, rather fuzzy reasons at best.

The Progressive Conservative Party has said from the outset that the establishment of the auto insurance board would not make anyone happy. Our party predicted it would not reduce auto insurance rates; that it would drive companies out of the business, limiting consumer choice; that it would establish a large and costly bureaucracy that consumers, one way or the other, would pay for; that it would ultimately, much to the glee of the New Democratic Party, lead us into the quagmire of government-run auto insurance; and that if this government were serious about reducing auto insurance rates, it would have taken steps to reduce the costs of settling claims. But the government, now in office for over three years, has done nothing to deal with claim settlements.

I want to talk about some of the impacts this has had. I mentioned a couple in terms of the 22-year-old female driver with no convictions, no traffic violations, no claims, facing a 142 per cent increase. The Leader of the Opposition used another example of a 182 per cent increase, I think it was, for a single male. There are many losers in this change in the classification system—many, many losers, and to a significant degree.

We have talked—and I mentioned this earlier on, and there was some criticism from the official opposition—in terms of our proposal to phase in any increases that result from this dislocation, this change in classification. What I want to say is that we can be criticized for that, but we are attempting, as an elected political party, to accept the reality of a majority government. We cannot overturn the decisions of this government. We have to draw them to the attention of the public, obviously; there is a political role here to play. But we think we also have to be constructive.

There is some very severe dislocation occurring as a result of these changes. It is a catch-22 situation, a no-win situation. We do not know how justifiable these increases that Mercer has spent a great deal of time compiling are. They may be quite justifiable on a financial statement, but they obviously are clearly unacceptable to the consumers of this province. There has to be some middle ground.

If the Premier follows through on his election pledge simply to have no increases, I do not know what impact that is going to have on the insurance system across this province. But he is the one who made that promise. He has been very severely criticized for not following through on it. He has hemmed and hawed and has not answered the very legitimate questions that have



been asked of him in respect to why he has not followed through on that promise. Again, he is the one who made that promise clearly in the heat of an election campaign, and he is not following through on it. He has much to answer for.

If we accept the premise that some increases are justified, how do we balance that? It is pretty difficult for us. It is pretty difficult for us to know what is right or wrong. We suggested that that would be the case when we got into this situation. We suggested many months ago that getting into a very heavily regulated environment is going to create problems like that.

We can go back to some of the debate early on, December 7. I would like to quote some of the comments I made.

"Regulation leads to lack of competition and leads to another kick in the pants to consumers. But, at the same time, down the road we are looking at perhaps gradually reducing the number of private sector insurers. We are going to continue to reduce competition significantly in that industry, and we may get to the point where the competition is so limited that the government has to look at stepping in to fill a void—no other alternative..."

Obviously, that is a scenario dear to the heart of the official opposition in this province, and we have suggested that from the outset. The government tried to find some magic solution in respect to going halfway by this very significant intrusion into the private sector, establishing a very expensive bureaucracy which consumers ultimately have to pay for in one way or the other. We have to pay for it. They have gone that way, which obviously has not satisfied the NDP. They have not gone the complete way, but that is going to happen.

Obviously, if this government continues in office, when we run into situations like this, where no one really knows what is fair, other than what is fair to insurance companies if we want to keep the private sector operating in this province, or what is fair to insurers, we certainly know that increases of the magnitude of 142 per cent to 180 per cent in one year are clearly not acceptable. We will not accept them. The consumers of this province will not accept them.

Something has to be done. We simply cannot have this Premier sitting on his fanny and saying, "Look, I made these promises, but they don't mean a heck of a lot." We have this report, which is part of the process. They can say, "Well, this is not a government position; it's simply a recommendation from a consulting firm," but let's face it. This is part of a process established by his

government, part of a process to establish rates that are fair to insurance companies in this province in a severely regulated climate.

The government has to accept some degree of responsibility for that. They put this thing in the works; they established this bureaucracy. We did not. We were opposed to it. We felt there were other options, which we proposed to them over a period of months: a rate review process. A review process, not a rate-setting process, not a process with a very significant bureaucracy and government intrusion. We came up with an option that would indicate something like the Alberta system, with an outside maximum of four to five permanent employees, commenting on rates being proposed by insurance companies in this province.

### 1530

We also suggested very significant tort reform. Claim settlements in this province are averaging over \$20,000. What has the government done to try to reduce the claim settlements in this province? Absolutely nothing. It has done nothing meaningful. All it has done is create a huge bureaucracy at great expense to the consumers and taxpayers of this province. What do we end up with? There are 140 to 180 per cent proposed rate increases. It is simply ridiculous. It is simply unacceptable.

Now they try to sit back and say, "We are not going to do anything about it." Well, okay; we have suggested phasing in; we have not suggested phasing in 140 to 180 per cent increases. We have tried to be realistic. Some increases are inevitable. When you come up with a new rate classification system, there is going to be a bump and there are going to be winners and losers.

The New Democratic Party knew that. The government knew that. They both supported the change in rate classification. They supported it. Now they are saying, "You guys want to spread this over seven years." We are saying they have to accept the reality that there were going to be some increases along with that system change.

What is legitimate or not, we do not know; we are not in a position to know. But we know 140 to 180 per cent is not acceptable and that a 35 to 40 per cent rate increase in one year is not acceptable. We have to do something that is going to allow these people to properly afford auto insurance in this province, but we also have to give the private sector an adequate return on its dollars to stay in operation in this province. I accept that this is extremely difficult, given the very severe, regulated environment this government has placed them in.



As I said earlier, it is a catch-22 situation. It is very difficult. We are trying to be constructive on behalf of the consumers of this province, but at the same time we are trying to ensure a healthy private sector. The government cannot continue to go back on its promises. The Premier made a commitment. Let's see him keep it.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. M. C. Ray):** Are there other participants in the debate? The member for Algoma.

**Mr. Wildman:** Is it not a Liberal turn?

**The Acting Speaker:** There appears to be no Liberal who wants to speak.

**Mr. Ferraro:** I thought I was first up.

**Mr. Laughren:** Don't be embarrassed.

**Mr. Ferraro:** I am not embarrassed at all.

I rise with anticipation to respond to some of the comments made by the member for the third party and to participate in this debate. It is important that when we are talking about the substance of this debate, we look a little bit at history. I can recall quite vividly because it was one of my main campaign discussions—

Interjections.

**Mr. Ferraro:** If members of the opposition will give me a chance, I will try to reciprocate by being calm when they speak.

I can recall during the election that it indeed was a very volatile issue. To recollect, the situation was that the private sector insurance companies were increasing premiums at a rate of one to two per cent a month. Automatically the opposition party, the so-called, if you will, conscience of the consumer—and to some degree the third party—stood up and said: "We have to do something about this, folks. We somehow have to deal with this problem of insurance because this one to two per cent increase per month is totally unacceptable."

I think every politician in this room would agree that it was a very popular topic of conversation for obvious reasons, because of the financial ramifications. Quite a few people have to buy insurance, particularly auto insurance. I point out that a one to two per cent increase from the private sector would have amounted to well over a 50 per cent increase by this time if the government had not stepped in and put a freeze on, save and except the nine per cent it allowed for adjustment over a 12-month period.

Then to some degree, quite frankly, the argument boiled down to philosophy. The opposition, socialist in nature, which I respect but do not necessarily agree with, said that the answer was government-run auto insurance, that

the government should take over the auto insurance business and thereby the consumer would get the net benefit, to a greater degree of equity, if you will.

In my view and in the view of my party, that simply does not work. I could stand here and relate the disastrous horror stories that transpired in British Columbia and the massive infusions of hundreds of millions of dollars into its auto insurance plan. I could reiterate what happened in Manitoba in the first six months of 1987, a massive infusion of millions of dollars into its government insurance plan. I could reiterate the tremendous amount of bureaucracy that was created by the government in government-run auto insurance plans. But I will not, save to say that my view of free enterprise is in direct opposition to the socialists and that I do not believe the government can do anything, quite frankly, cheaper than the private sector.

If you dispel that point of view, it goes over to the third party, the champions of free enterprise. The member for Leeds-Grenville stands up and says, "We told you Liberals that you should never have created this insurance board, that you should have kept your nose out of the private sector, that every time you get into the private sector, it ends up costing the consumers more money, and that it is wrong." That stalwart free enterpriser over there says that the government should keep its big nose out of the private sector—end of discussion, end of argument.

That is the same party that in 1975 brought in rent controls. That is the same independent, free enterprise party that brought in rent controls and said, "We have to manage the rental market."

Is this a revelation that overnight the Conservative Party all of a sudden says that free enterprise is the right solution to all our social ills? I suggest, with great respect, that they are speaking out of both sides of their mouths.

What was the alternative? Our alternative, as indicated by the Premier, was quite simple. Something had to be done. People were getting gouged, if you will, by the insurance industry. There were essentially three alternatives. Either you did nothing which is what the Conservative Party wanted us to do, or according to the opposition, you took it over and increased the socialist aspect of the insurance industry and of our government, or you set up an independent board of experts to look at the situation.

The leader—the member, rather; maybe possible leader—of the third party indicated that what they wanted was a rate review process. Let's look at that. This insurance board in fact has done that.



What did it look at? It had hundreds of public hearings and it has rendered decisions already on a uniform class plan, on a rate-making methodology, and indeed, on industry profitability.

As required by law, it has adopted a class plan that eliminates age, sex, marital status, handicap and family status. All those are criteria that were used to establish rates. What is now being proposed, in my view, is a much fairer system, that an individual's insurance premium will be determined by the individual's driving record. I think that is fair.

The stage we are at is that the rates and the range of rates will be determined, not in the back rooms, in the boardrooms of insurance companies, but by this independent board—independent of the government, independent of the Insurance Bureau of Canada, independent of the insurance companies, independent of the insurance brokers—a separate entity that will determine, based on all the information it has accumulated, a fair and reasonable rate that can be charged the consumer.

1540

What is the biggest cost we found in this rate review process? I point out that this board costs about \$6.5 million. The member for Leeds-Grenville indicated that we have created this massive bureaucracy, that we should have kept our nose out of the private sector and that there is this massive bureaucracy we now have to pay for.

That works out to about \$1 per premium. I suggest that the people in my riding of Guelph are quite willing to pay \$1 for an independent board of experts to sift through all the information and gobbledegook you get from insurance companies, insurance brokers, accountants and economists, and to come up with a fair, just and independent rate of premium to charge. I do not think that is unreasonable.

It was the mandate of Mercer, of this independent consultant hired by the insurance board, to determine not lower insurance premiums—it was right in the mandate. Now, all of a sudden, the opposition is standing up and saying we promised lower insurance premiums, but when the mandate came out it did not say to lower insurance premiums, but rather to ensure that rates were fair and that there was no price-gouging of consumers by insurance companies.

I think that is reasonable. I reiterate that perhaps one of the greatest benefits of this process is that now the average consumer is at least going to know, and it will have to be

justified, where the rate is coming from and to what degree.

Out of every premium dollar, 80 cents is spent on the cost of claims. I will agree with the member for Leeds-Grenville that the real, tangible item to deal with in lowering insurance premiums is going to result in dealing with the cost of claims. That is the only point in contention, and we are looking at processes and reports—Osborne, the Waddams report, the Zuber commission—to deal with that.

Tort reform, quite frankly, is a joke. The cost of tort reform, based on that 80 per cent, is less than three per cent. There is all this crying and yelling about tort reform being the solution; it is not.

I say in conclusion that we have taken the most viable option, and that is to get an independent board to look at the insurance problem in this province. They have an independent consultant who has made a recommendation, and only a recommendation, to this board. Public hearings start December 12. I am sure that when the rates come out in January, they will be fair, equitable and understandable by the consumer.

**Mr. Kormos:** There is some great concern here, because there have been words used in the legislation, words like “fairness” and “equitability.” Perhaps there are some who perceive the conduct of the board to date as being fair. If it has been fair, it has been fair to the insurance industry and to literally nobody else.

There are some things that must be kept in mind. The board itself noted that in its third stage of preparing the report on profitability standards there was no consumer input. There was no opportunity, because of the absence of consumer input, to provide information, facts and figures, that would, one, rebut the facts and figures provided to the board, and two, provide a human facet to it.

It remains that the board at that point in time—Mr. Kruger warned all those present when he revealed that report that this was not going to result in a decrease in premiums. Indeed, he was not so bold as to say it was going to result in any sort of stabilization of premiums. What he virtually guaranteed was that the report of the board was going to result in an increase in premiums. That was inevitable because the fact remains that the board established, as a standard of profitability, a return on equity that was anywhere from three to four times the existing return on equity enjoyed by insurers.

One of the difficulties the board itself acknowledged was that it had difficulty coping with



the figures. The fact is there was talk of not just hundreds of thousands, but millions of dollars being misplaced in the course of calculations. In some of the questions that have been asked right here in the recent past, one of the issues has been that, obviously, the board is prepared to take a stance whereby it guarantees profits and that it encourages inefficiency.

In the Mercer report, one of the comments made is that as a premise, during the course of establishing the range of rates, consideration was given to increasing the attractiveness of Ontario as a place to conduct the business of automobile insurance. In other words, the authors of that report wanted to make sure Ontario was a good, profitable—indeed, guaranteed profitable—place for insurance companies to conduct their automobile insurance business.

Another premise they adopted was a recognition of the differences in skill levels in underwriting and claims and in operating efficiencies among insurers. Basically, what they are acknowledging there is that not all insurers are equal. Indeed, they are not only acknowledging inefficiencies, but they are very much suggesting that inefficiencies are the norm and ought to be encouraged.

One of the questions asked in the recent past of the Minister of Financial Institutions (Mr. Elston) was: "If the government is prepared to consider, as part of its own board's recommendation, that it guarantee profits, is the government going to guarantee service? Is the government going to guarantee that every driver in the province has access to auto insurance?" The minister declined to answer that. In fact, the proof is obvious. It is in the press and it is in people's refusals when they attend at their insurance brokers seeking auto insurance.

Co-operators General Insurance, we know, has declined and declines to write insurance policies here in the city of Toronto. I am advised by brokers that Wawanesa joins it in discouraging brokers in the process of selling auto insurance, and that Advocate General joins them in discouraging brokers from writing auto insurance.

In the Hamilton Spectator on November 5, 1988, "David Coons, a Burlington-based broker, says that the decision by Co-operators to stop writing new business in the Toronto area could mark the beginning of the end of private car insurance in Ontario. Mr. Coons, a broker in the Hamilton-Burlington area, indicates that he speaks not only for himself but he speaks for a number of brokers in the same area."

The important thing is to regard the impact on families and on workers in the province by virtue of the proposals contained in the Mercer report. We look at a 22-year-old married male, licensed six years, with a 21-year-old wife, licensed three years, with no claims or convictions for either of them and no bad driving records. These people will suffer an increase in rates ranging anywhere from 85 per cent to 189 per cent. When one speaks of this proposal as being punitive, it is hard to argue that it is not when one regards the impact the rates will have on this particular family.

One looks at a 22-year-old single female principal driver, licensed six years, with no claims or convictions since licensed, who has been with the same insurer, driving a modest automobile and commuting 20 kilometres one way with annual driving distance of 30,000 kilometres. This young woman will suffer insurance increases ranging from 56 per cent, more properly perhaps in the range of 81 per cent, 88 per cent, 97 per cent, climbing to 111 per cent or 118 per cent.

Another family scenario is the case of a single male, somewhat older, a 30-year-old principal driver, licensed 10 years, no secondary driver; once again, no claims or convictions; once again, a modest automobile, a 1985 Ford Escort; once again, with the same insurer since licensed, living in a small community in eastern Ontario. This driver will suffer increases ranging from 32 per cent all the way up to 47 per cent.

The list goes on and on. Young people are being punished. Women are being punished. The province is condoning it. The province is guaranteeing these profits and these increases for auto insurers here in the province.

### 1550

It is strange that the government itself would decline to accept responsibility for generating discussion about government auto insurance. Indeed, the Toronto Star in its editorial on December 3, 1988, did not condemn the auto insurers for the huge increase in premiums, because it acknowledged that these people are interested in profits as large as they can make and that if a government is going to invite them—indeed, not only invite them but permit them and also protect those profits—then who is to blame for the increase in auto insurance premiums?

Not the insurance companies. Not the tort system, because insurers in general have for too long used the \$6-million Brampton judgement as a rationale for increased premiums, when indeed what has happened, and we know this well, is



that the Ontario Court of Appeal has struck that down and there has not been \$6 million paid out.

The people to blame are, as the editorial in the *Toronto Star* indicated, the Liberal government, which refused to consider and acknowledge a government automobile insurance system as a viable alternative; indeed, the only alternative, in view of the fact that insurers on the one hand cry poverty, cry that they are not making any money.

We know that to be incorrect on the basis of the third stage, the profitability standards report of Kruger. They argue now that the increases are not sufficient, even though they constitute up to 300 per cent, possibly even 400 per cent increases in profitability. They are not prepared to desert the arena, because they have not thrown in the gauntlet yet.

Indeed, they spent and continue to spend considerable amounts of money preserving their right to provide this business in the province. In the last provincial election, the auto insurance industry spent in excess of \$118,000 in this province in donations to Liberal candidates, the largest single donation to Liberal candidates.

**Mr. D. R. Cooke:** Which candidates?

**Mr. Kormos:** The member missed out on it.

The largest single donation was to the unsuccessful Liberal candidate in Welland-Thorold riding, who, of course, was running against Mel Swart, who has championed the cause of public auto insurance in this province for some considerable period of time.

They are not only prepared to fight tooth and nail to retain the right to provide this auto insurance; they are prepared to spend a considerable amount of money doing it. They are all the more gleeful now that the government is in a position whereby it is going to be guaranteeing them profits; guaranteeing that they can operate with high levels of inefficiency, yet maintain the same return on equity as they would have had without that inefficiency; guaranteeing that they do not have to adequately insure all the drivers of the province, but guaranteeing that they will maintain the same return on equity.

They cannot have their cake and eat it too. The fact is that there is, and the Liberal member should know this, a consumer revolution storming outside of these particular chambers. The fact is that the people of the community will speak and they will speak loudly and clearly. Their option is government auto insurance. It is one that this government should be prepared to provide.

**Mr. Cousens:** I am pleased to rise and speak in this very important emergent debate. I would

like to stop and give recognition to the member for Leeds-Grenville for the way in which he is giving leadership to the province and to our party on this very important issue.

This morning in our caucus, we were discussing another bill, An Act to amend the Trespass to Property Act, Bill 149, which the people of Ontario will soon learn the consequences of once it comes up in the House for debate. The member for Leeds-Grenville addressed caucus and said, "I would like to interrupt the proceedings of this caucus meeting about an emergency debate this afternoon." He had spent some time last night working over this special report prepared by William M. Mercer Ltd. that was tabled yesterday, and he said, "This has to be taken as an emergency for the people of Ontario."

I would like to just stop and give great recognition to our colleague the member for Leeds-Grenville for causing this House today to stop in its tracks and look at what the Mercer report is all about. It is very fortunate that in spite of the fact there are only 17 Progressive Conservatives in this House, each one of us who carries a heavy load of responsibility against the 113 other people out there is endeavouring to do the right thing for the people of this province.

I have to say, as I look at a speech made by the member for Leeds-Grenville in this House on December 7, 1987, just one year ago tomorrow, he had a number of things to say about the insurance industry and what this government was doing to it. He said, "a government-run auto insurance program for this province [is] a step down that very slippery slope and one about which we have a great deal of concern."

In another quote from the member, and this is a year ago, before we got this report, he said, "Females under the age of 25 could be looking at increases of up to 50 per cent, and 10 per cent across-the-board increases for those over 25."

He saw into the future, but he did not see it being as bad as it is turning out. We are talking about significant increases of which the silent majority out there are really not aware at this point. They are not aware of the problems that consumers in this province are going to face because of initiatives for which this government has to take complete responsibility.

He was a prophet a year ago and if we start looking at what he said, it is coming true. I want to stop and give recognition on behalf of the members of our party in this House and say thank you, Mr. Runciman for stopping the House in its tracks to consider what this government was about to do.



We just have to look back in history. It does not take long to go back to April 28, 1987, to the speech from the throne, which is the statement of government policy and government plans for the future, when the Honourable Lincoln Alexander said these words for the government. I want to put them on the record again, because they are there and I want you to be reminded, Mr. Speaker, and other honourable members of this House. He said: "My government will protect Ontarians from unfair and arbitrary practices in the marketplace. In doing so, we will take steps to promote increased consumer awareness."

They are going to be so aware of what this government is doing to them when they start getting the bills. They are going to have a new sense of awareness that there is a Liberal government in power in Ontario. I do not think the Lieutenant Governor meant it that way, but it is a fact.

He then went on to say: "We recently announced a comprehensive package of new auto insurance legislation. Among other provisions, the program will cap auto insurance premiums and establish a public review process under which insurance rates must be justified."

Not only has it set a new cap, but the cap now means that some people, in the examples that come out of the Mercer report—I have a situation of a 16-year-old single female driver who will face a 37 per cent increase in premiums. I have a situation of a 22-year-old married male driver who could face a 189 per cent increase in premiums. That is why we have an emergency in the House today. Yet the Lieutenant Governor, speaking for the government in the speech from the throne, said, "Yes, we're going to review the process and bring out new rates."

We were alert to the problems we would have as soon as this government started interfering with the insurance process. The member for Wilson Heights (Mr. Kwinter), who was the Minister for Financial Institutions at the time, back in April 1987, said in the House—and I want to put this on the record, because these people who are now the government of the province have forgotten about the commitments they made a year ago—in response to a question by the leader of the Progressive Conservative Party:

"The position we have taken on the issue is one of equity and fairness. There is a great number of motorists in Ontario whose rates have been arbitrarily set and who have been upgraded in their ratings for no apparent reason. We will bring some equity to that system." The new equity is that everybody is going to have massive

increases, except for a very small number of people.

The then Minister of Financial Institutions said: "Again, and I have said this before, we will provide a fair, equitable system that will protect the insured in Ontario, but that does not mean the rates will necessarily go down. They could go down, but we are not guaranteeing it."

I do not think we could get a guarantee out of this government for anything. Last year we debated about Christmas shopping around Christmas. We have the same problem coming up this year. Anything they have touched seems to go sour.

So when the Minister of Financial Institutions went to talk, here he is making the prognostication. He said further: "I announced several government initiatives intended to bring fundamental fairness to the automobile insurance system for consumers."

What we are seeing here now is the very thing we warned would happen. The member for Leeds-Grenville, who was formerly Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations and who is now critic for this important area, said there was going to be a problem and we are seeing it right now. It is self-evident.

What is the government going to do about it? I am fascinated. I think they are going to try to slip it through as fast as they can, so that the public will forget about it two or three years from now when they come along and face the electorate again looking for a mandate.

#### 1600

We depend on our vehicles and on our transportation to get around in this country. We cannot just hop on a horse where you do not need to have a licence to drive. You hop in your car and you go from A to B, and if you are doing any kind of driving or any kind of travel, you are going to have to make sure you are protected.

I believe we have done a lot of the right things in providing protection for vehicles. We want to protect people from injury, we want to have a compensation program for them, but we also have to do it through a responsible program of premium setting and insurance. What we are seeing here now is an increase in rates for drivers of up to 40 per cent.

I guess that is really the cost of having a Liberal government, that there is always going to be a cost attached to it. They have a very attractive way of saying, "Oh, we're going to do good things for you, we're going to do all the nice things." I quoted those statements from the speech from the throne and from the Minister of

Financial Institutions last year. A year later we are seeing the same kind of thing.

The insurance industry is soon going to be so crippled and so thwarted in trying to perform a service for the people in Ontario that many providers of that service could well withdraw their services from the province. Instead of just a little bit of government regulation and a little bit of an increase now, which for some people amounts to as much as a 189 per cent increase in premiums, we are going to see a continuing escalation of costs. It is something that is going to go through the roof.

Before that happens, this House has a chance to react in a responsible way. I am confident that, through this emergency debate we are having today, the government will stop, pause, look and listen to what we are saying, realize there is still time for it to go and review the considerations that have come from the Mercer group and go back to its advisers, go back to the insurance people and try to work out a system that can somehow phase in responsible methods of handling these cost increases.

I do not see this government willing to listen. I see the honourable minister who is responsible for this shaking his head, almost laughing, as if to say, "We don't need to do it." I guess they do not, because they have the majority. They can do what they want, when they want, how they want.

This is just another nail in the coffin for the Liberals in Ontario and it is one that every person who has to pay auto premiums is going to remember. They are going to remember when it was lower, they are going to remember when it was higher and they are going to know whom to blame. They are going to blame the Premier and the Liberal government of Ontario.

**The Acting Speaker:** The next speaker, the member for Oakville South.

[Applause]

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** Not much enthusiasm.

**Hon. Mr. Elston:** I am enthusiastic.

**Mr. Carrothers:** I appreciate the support.

I want to thank the member for Markham (Mr. Cousens) for his message of doom and gloom today. I also want to say to him in no uncertain terms that I think the government has indeed kept its promise.

Interjection.

**Mr. Carrothers:** One can be. Let me point out some of the problems this is dealing with. The government has indeed kept its promise to bring forward a program to give us fair, equitable and understandable rates.

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** No, no; they promised lower rates.

**Mr. Carrothers:** That was not the commitment.

I want to address my comments to a theme that my colleague the member for Guelph (Mr. Ferraro) brought up, and that was what the fundamental problem has been in our insurance system in the past few years.

**Mr. Pouliot:** We're being ripped off. That's the problem.

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** You're going to legalize the ripoff.

**The Acting Speaker:** Order, please. We would like to hear the member.

**Mr. Carrothers:** On the one hand, the insurance system in this province has suffered from excessive rate fluctuations over the years and from an unfair rate classification system. The end result was that drivers were experiencing unstable premiums year to year and those premiums were being charged against them on a classification that was unfair.

We have received two suggestions as to what might be done. One I would call cosmetic, a rate board with four employees, which I think the member for Leeds-Grenville suggested. That is the kind of program they have in Alberta and a couple of other provinces, sort of a toothless tiger that merely brings in and legitimizes the inefficiencies that the member for Welland-Thorold (Mr. Kormos) was talking about. One simply approves things as they are brought forward. The other one is a dogmatic one. This goes to the question of ownership and indicates that the government should run the system.

I do not think either of those suggestions is the solution to the problem, because neither of them gets at what is the difficulty. It is not a question of who controls the company; it is not a question of who owns it; it is a question of how the rates that are charged are set.

We have had in this province over the past year something which has often been called cash-flow underwriting by those who observe the insurance industry.

**Mr. Pouliot:** Some of your clients?

**Mr. Carrothers:** Yes, maybe some of my clients. Regarding cash-flow underwriting: Excessive competition in the marketplace from people who can do contracts with offshore companies that will take the insurance, come into the marketplace and drop their rates, buying business and basically causing those in the insurance industry, the more legitimate and



larger companies, to have to drop their premiums in order to compete.

This results in a cyclical phenomenon in insurance rates. It often runs over six or eight years, where you see premium rates dropping until the companies that have got those contracts to reinsure find they can no longer run it off. Their costs of claims have gone up above the premiums taken in. Then they get out of the marketplace and the companies left in the marketplace bring their premiums back up to recuperate and get those lost costs.

This has resulted in the instability which this rate board is meant to go after and solve. With a new classification system not set by the companies but set by an independent rate board, a fair classification system that gets rid of a number of the features such as sex, marital status and so on, we will know and the public will be able to understand how those rates were set. Those companies operating in the province will have to do so on a fair basis.

The alternation between the bargains that people were receiving in the past on premium rates and then paying too much in order to get back the lost profits has created the kind of situation that I believe we are all concerned about. Certainly, I have been concerned about it over the years. Many of my constituents come and talk to me about the kinds of increases they suffer from time to time.

I think once this board comes into place, once the decision—and I should remind the members that we are talking here about a report of the Mercer agency which has been brought in and commissioned by the board as the starting point for a discussion. We have been talking in a debate today as if the decisions have been taken, as if the rates which are set out in this document are the ones that are going to happen. I have to underline to the members here that that is not what is going to be taking place.

Public input will be starting next week. I can recall, and I am sure many members saw, advertisements in the Toronto Star. I have heard ads on the radio. I have heard much discussion about the amount of public input that is going on. I am confident that once this board has made its decision, it will come forward with fair, stable rates in this province that we know we can count on. We will not be subject to unfair and unpredictable rate increases year by year.

I think the result will be a fair and equitable insurance industry in the province. The goal that has been set out in Bill 2, which was the one setting up this rate board and mandating the

board to set rates that are in its opinion “just and reasonable and not excessive or inadequate,” is a goal that we all have in this province.

A government insurance company as well as any other would have to face the realities of the cost. I think my friend the member for Guelph commented on that already. We have seen large increases in the other provinces because the temptation is to, shall we say, manipulate the rates that company causes for purposes—

**Mr. Pouliot:** Still 25 per cent lower, established by the New Democrats. Let's call this what it is.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Pouliot:** With the same coverage.

**Mr. Fleet:** The New Democrats were politically interfering with the auto insurance business in Manitoba.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order. One member at a time, please.

1610

**Mr. Carrothers:** I would have to disagree with my honourable friend that the government insurance plan cannot guarantee lower rates. This is something which we have seen in many reports.

I would also remind my friends that the size of the program that would be brought in if the government should take over the insurance industry in this province would be massive. I would suggest to them that if they like the operations of the Workers' Compensation Board then they would love how a government plan would work in this province because it would create the same kind of monster.

When I go in and purchase insurance I like the ability to choose whom I am dealing with. I like the ability to choose another company, if I do not have proper claims treatment. This is something they would be prepared to deny the citizens of this province, by going into a government scheme. That is not the solution.

The solution to the problem that has been facing this province is how the rates are set. The board has been set up and is operating, and we are in the middle of the process of seeing what happens. I would suggest perhaps we are even premature in having this debate since we have not seen what that board is going to suggest. The solution is going to produce a system where we get stable rates in this province and get the kind of automobile insurance we all want.

**Mr. Wildman:** It has been interesting to listen to this debate this afternoon. It is obvious, after the number of speakers we have had, that we

have really three choices being presented to the people of the province.

On the one hand, we have the Conservative Party, which says it does not want to interfere in the private sector; however, it would like to have an insurance review board which would look at rates. The member for Leeds-Grenville then says that system would lead inevitably to higher rates, to rates that would be raised consecutively for seven years. That is one choice that is being presented.

We have also the New Democratic Party, which clearly for the last number of years in this province and across Canada has advocated a driver-owned plan, a publicly owned plan that would be run at cost without private profit involved, to ensure that the drivers of the province get the coverage they need and the service they need without excessive rates.

The third option is being proposed by the government. It is a system which leaves automobile insurance in private hands—the insurance companies—but sets up a regulatory system with a board that is responsible not just for reviewing rates, as is being proposed by the Conservatives, but for setting rates.

I submit that with this third option that is being accepted by the government we have the worst of both worlds. As a New Democrat, I believe we have a terrible situation if we leave it simply to the private sector, as the Conservatives would do, because as the member for Leeds-Grenville has indicated, inevitably that means higher rates. He suggests higher rates consecutively over seven years.

It does not provide service at cost, as the New Democrats advocate, because the board that has been set up by the government would guarantee the private insurers a 12.5 per cent profit, or at least the board would ensure that the insurance companies get a “fair” return on their equity; that, in effect, means higher rates.

What we have is the bureaucracy of a board to look at the rates and then to set higher rates. We do not have, as is advocated by our friends in the Conservative Party, the private sector determining the rates, which I think would be a bad thing; but at least the Conservatives have been consistent in saying that is what they want.

We also do not have a system that provides the service and the coverage at cost as a service to the public. We have a system that still is going to set higher rates and ensure that the insurance companies, the private insurers, get a “fair” return on their equity.

What we have now in this province and what is proposed by the Mercer report to the board is not in any way similar to what the Premier said in September 1987. At that time, the Premier said he had a specific plan to lower insurance rates in Ontario. What has happened since that time with the regulatory program that has been set up by the government?

What has happened is we have had the unfreezing of rates after the election, the increase of nine per cent to the insurance companies, a guarantee of return on equity of about 12.5 per cent and now a report by the private consultant Mercer that says we should have on the average of 35 per cent to 40 per cent increases in insurance premiums in this province. That is an average, of course; some of the premiums would double for individual drivers in this province.

The government has made a great to-do about the fact that this is just a consultant's report, that it is a report that was commissioned by the regulatory board but it is just a report and that the board has to and will decide. According to the Liberals in this House, the board will decide to ensure a fair, equitable and reasonable rate structure.

I listened very closely to Mr. Kruger, who is on that board, I believe.

**Hon. Mr. Elston:** He's chairman of the board.

**Mr. Wildman:** Chairman of the board, yes. He said that while no decision had been made, the Mercer report recommendations would be the framework about which the hearings would be held and on which the rates would be set. That inevitably means higher rates—not lower rates, as the Premier said in September 1987, but higher rates. The increases may not be, and I hope they are not, 35 per cent to 40 per cent on average, but they will be increases.

I have yet to hear any Liberal in this House say that the Premier's promise of September 1987 will be carried out by this government, that we will have lower rates. If that is indeed what the Liberals believe, then I challenge them, one of them at least, to get up in this House and tell us that the board will set rates lower than we are paying now, which is what the Premier said was going to happen in September 1987.

If the Premier was telling the truth, he had a plan for lowering the rates, not a regulatory plan that would inevitably mean higher rates for most people, not a plan that would lower rates for a few drivers in the province and raise rates for everyone else, but a plan that would specifically lower rates.



I can only conclude along the lines of a periodical I read from time to time and which is not usually known to support the New Democratic Party. It is the *Toronto Star*. On December 3, it had an editorial headed "Peterson's to Blame." I will quote from it:

"A decision to allow private automobile insurance companies to earn a 12.5 per cent return next year is fair enough, even though the industry says it's too low.

"The limit on profits—a 400 per cent increase over the last year—was set by the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board, which was created by Premier David Peterson's government to put a lid on sharply rising auto insurance premium costs.

"So consumers will have to pay \$504 million more in premiums next year. How much more each driver will pay has yet to be determined.

"Don't blame the insurance companies. If they're going to provide auto insurance, the private companies have every right to expect a reasonable profit. After all, that is what Peterson's 'free enterprise solution' to auto insurance is all about.

"But you certainly have a right to blame Peterson for the \$504-million premium increase.

"Had he set up a government-run auto insurance plan in the first place, there would have been no need for his government to make a profit at all.

"That idea's still worth considering. Take note, Premier."

1620

I agree completely with this editorial by the *Toronto Star*. We cannot blame the insurance companies for wanting to make a good profit; that is what they are in business for. But if we had set up a government-run plan, the government plan would not have to make a profit; it would be set up as a service to the public.

Just as the government health care plan in this province is not set up to make a profit at the expense of the people of this province, a government-run auto insurance plan would be set up to serve the public, not to gouge them. Instead, we have a regulatory policy of this government that sets up a board.

Frankly, we now know that the board will inevitably gouge the public on insurance rates. We are going to get higher rates, not lower rates. The Premier has broken his promise. He promised in September 1987, just before the election, that he had a plan to lower insurance rates. We now know that those rates are going to

be higher. The only thing we do not know is by how much.

**Mr. Harris:** I will not be very long, Mr. Speaker, because you do not give me a very long time in this forum to speak, but I am pleased to have the opportunity today.

I want to congratulate my colleague the member for Leeds-Grenville—I said before, in fact, when I looked at Hansard that I always forget whether it is Grenville-Leeds or Leeds-Grenville—I congratulate my colleague for introducing this motion. I think it is important that we talk about this today.

I think it is also important that in my remarks I refresh the government on some of the comments I made on second reading of this silly, silly bill they brought in. I understand the comments from my leader today and from the New Democratic Party that the Premier played fast and loose with the truth during the last election campaign. I understand that. Obviously, on September 7, when he told the people of Ontario that he had a plan to reduce auto insurance rates, he did not have a plan. I think that is evident now. The plan that he had in mind was to tell the people what he thought they would like to hear.

**Mr. Wildman:** We want fair, higher rates.

**Mr. Harris:** He promised lower insurance rates. He said, "I have a plan for it." Obviously he did not have a plan for it. That does not surprise me, because throughout this Premier's career, and particularly in the last three years, he has said on many occasions: "I am going to do this. I am going to solve this. This will be better. This is what we are going to do." He has broken his word every time.

It does not surprise me. Quite frankly, it does not shock me at all. I guess when you are faced with misrepresentation repeatedly, time after time after time, maybe you get a little callous and you get used to it. I do not want to dwell on that argument, but it is a fact of life. That is what we are faced with with this particular Premier.

What do we have when we look through the press clippings? Do we have lower car insurance rates, as were promised? No, we have headlines such as "Thirty-five to 40 per cent jump...urged by report." This is the report of the board that was set up by the government, as their plan. We also have, "Car Insurance Could Cost 40 Per Cent More," "Auto Insurance Premiums Should Rise by 40 Per Cent: Study" and "Premium's on Pain."

I do not like to say "I told you so," except when I did tell you so. I think at this particular point in time it is important to reflect on this legislation.

The government has rent control legislation it brought in which was supposed to do this, this, this, this and this, and I think it would be honest and acceptable politically, when after two years the objectives which were put forward as the rationale for a piece of legislation clearly were not being met, to stand up and say: "Hold it here. We made a mistake. We were wrong," rather than blindly defending something that obviously is not working.

This legislation, the auto insurance legislation the government jammed through this House with its majority, clearly is not working. The government said it was going to have a plan to reduce auto rates. It brought in a bill. This was the response to its election commitment. We have already had nine per cent in one year, and now it seems we are looking at, on average, 30 or 40 per cent to 45 per cent. So it is not working.

It strikes me that the honest thing to do, and I think the politically acceptable thing to do, instead of defending this charade, is to say: "We were wrong. We made a mistake. It's not working." Indeed, if the Premier stood up and said, "I did think I had a plan that would work, but I was wrong," that would be better to me than blindly carrying on and pretending that he actually had something. That would be politically acceptable to me. I would probably still be critical and say, "I told you so," but to keep defending this system blindly is really a joke.

What we have is a bill which, as I stated on February 11, applies monopoly logic to what should be a competitive industry, and a bill which gives us the very worst of two systems. No system is perfect. The free market, competitive system is not perfect. I think it is the best system. I think it leads to the fewest complications, the fewest problems, and invariably it leads to the lowest rates to have as free and full a competition in the marketplace as is possible.

When you do that, and when you have a Progressive Conservative philosophy, the Conservative part says we have a full market system and the market will provide the competition which will provide the lowest rates. The Progressive side of my party and the progressive side of me says, "That system will have the fewest losers but there may be some losers." Then the Progressive side says: "We'll take care of those people. We will help those who need help."

I apply that logic to every bill. I apply it to every problem we face: "Come up with the system that creates the fewest problems, creates the greatest fairness, provides the most competition." That is the conservative side of me. The

progressive side of me says, "Then, through social programs or through assistance, help those who aren't able to survive in that system."

What did this government bring in? It brought in the worst of a monopoly. It set up a monopoly situation. It said: "We're going to treat this insurance industry, with all these insurers, as if it were a monopoly." There are grave problems with monopolies, and some of them are necessary. I understand utility monopolies that appear to be necessary in our society, and we try to regulate it. We try to control them. Indeed, we are not able to very well, because, like most social theory, it does not work. What happens with these socialist policies is that you put them down and they look nice and neat and they all fit, but they do not work. They just do not work. We see that time after time after time.

Why, when we do not have to have monopolies—well, members know what happens. Hydro hires all the lawyers and all the tax experts, and they go and they buffalo the board. It is a pass-on-the-costs type of day. It is the only way we can control them, but there is no control on costs. When you try to put controls on costs, they are able to hire all the expert people who can go to the board and justify these costs.

### 1630

Now we have applied that logic to what used to be a competitive industry. That is why—and I am not surprised—you have 30 per cent, 40 per cent, 50 per cent. Next year it will probably be another 20, 30, 40 per cent. These guys are not stupid. They are some of the smartest people, and tax experts and legal experts and accountants, so they know how to play the system.

I agree with my friends from the New Democratic Party when they say it is not the insurance companies' fault. What this government did to them is that it said, "You can't compete any more; we're going to take the competitiveness out of it, we're going to treat you as if you are a monopoly," so those are the rules that they play by. They are playing by them very well, and who can blame them? This is the system the government asked them to operate under.

It will not work, and until the government faces up to that and says, "We were wrong; we've got to withdraw this bill, we've got to change the legislation, we've got to restore the competitiveness into the marketplace," this problem will get worse and worse and worse.

**Ms. Hart:** If I may, I would like to shift the focus of this debate away from the words that may or may not have been said. There has been a



lot of focus on words. I would like to change that focus to the actions of this government.

Unlike some of my colleagues on the other side of the House, I do not consider myself an ideologue. I do have a preference for a private sector kind of solution to the many problems that we all know exist in the auto insurance industry, but I do not think, like my friend opposite who was just speaking, that the free play of market forces is necessarily a panacea to these problems either.

What I would like to have happen, before we wipe out an industry that is a very large employer in this province, is taking our best shot at a private sector solution, dealing with some of the problems and coming to grips with them, the aim being that we are trying to improve fairness and equity to consumers. Such sentiments as these led this government to set up the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board.

We have heard lots of arguments on the other side, but let's just remember for a few moments what was happening in the auto insurance industry just a short year ago.

Rates at that time were set not openly but in the corporate boardrooms of the insurance companies. The consuming public, the consumers, like all of us here who drive, had no say at all in the setting of those rates. We had no way of knowing—even the industry association, which made representations to this government did not know—the cost of claims to the industry. Their data were very patchy indeed, and we know for sure that the cost of claims is the biggest factor in the setting of premium rates.

A year ago there was discrimination in rates. The companies could discriminate however they pleased: on the basis of sex, on the basis of age, on any other basis they chose.

Each company set its rates differently. We had no way of discovering the rationale for the setting of those rates. I suspect that there was some similarity to the way rates were set in the trucking industry, which has a lot of hocus-pocus to it. In fact, I suspect that a lot of those rates were set on the basis of what the market would bear and there was no other rationale to the setting of those rates.

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** Now what are you going to do? You are just going to raise them.

**The Deputy Speaker:** One member at a time, please.

**Ms. Hart:** In April 1987, the members will recall, the rates were increasing at a rate of one to two per cent a month with no end in sight.

**Mr. Ferraro:** A month?

**Ms. Hart:** That is a month.

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** How much have they gone up this year, Christine?

**The Deputy Speaker:** Would the member for Windsor-Riverside (Mr. D. S. Cooke) please—

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** They have gone up nine per cent this year.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order, please.

**Ms. Hart:** To address those problems, the government set up an independent board and gave it the mandate it needed to bring fairness to the rate-setting process. The independence, as all members know, is an important aspect to this board. There is no interference in the mandate of the board. There is no interference by any of the interested parties, including the government. That is something that enables the public to have some trust in the process that the board is going through.

The board was given the powers to make a judicial determination. That is very important in the legal sense, although my friends may not appreciate that importance. It must hold a hearing; it must advertise widely; it must hear evidence from the public, from the industry and from experts in various fields. Then it is charged, by its legislation, to come to a reasoned decision based on the evidence that it has heard.

The process itself is very important. It demystifies the rate setting process. The public now is in the position of knowing how rates are set. It opens up the process. It has ended the discrimination on the basis of age and sex, and now something that makes sense, a driver's record, is the primary determinant of premium.

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** The Premier said he was going to lower the rates, and now they are going up.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order, please.

**Ms. Hart:** That factor makes sense, because all of us know, can understand that bad drivers, drivers with bad records should pay more. That is fair. That is one of the things that the board brought to this province. In the opening up of the process, it made it more understandable to consumers, a lot less hocus-pocus.

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** Who wrote this for you? Come on, the Premier promised to lower the rates, and now they are going up.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order, please.

**Ms. Hart:** If I am a driver, as I and many of us here are, I know that if I have my third accident in a year, my insurance premium is going to go up.

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** I don't know why the member is supporting this lack of integrity.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. May I remind the members of standing order 24(b). Thank you.

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** Isn't there something that talks about integrity when a leader says one thing—

**The Deputy Speaker:** There is a period for questions and comments afterwards. One member at a time, please.

**Ms. Hart:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is hard to quarrel with the fact that bad drivers pay more. Presumably there will be other factors as data are developed. For example, one that has been much neglected is the type of cars that have more accidents or need costlier repairs. They will have a direct impact—these findings and this database that will be built up by the board—on a manufacturer of cars when designing new cars for the market. Just maybe, that will lead to safer cars on our roads.

Another big plus for consumers lies in the mandate of the board to control not just the rates themselves but the whole process of rate-setting, which includes the levels of costs. Opening up the industry's costs to public scrutiny is, in my view, going to be what brings down our premium rates over the long haul.

It is not a quick fix. People know that there are not any quick fixes. Any good solution for a complex problem never happens overnight. But loss costs are the biggest factor behind insurance premiums, and loss costs include such things as repairs, legal costs, adjustment costs, administrative costs and damages. The board has indicated that it wants to look closely at loss costs and how they can be better controlled.

For example, they might want to look at various alternatives to our fault-based system of compensation. If we did not begin by opening up the whole question of costs to public scrutiny via the board, the next step, the containment of those costs, could not be usefully undertaken.

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This debate has been sparked by the Mercer report numbers. That is just one of the pieces of evidence that the board will be examining at its hearing, which begins on December 12. It is one of many pieces of evidence. It has advertised widely. I saw in the press the ad with the graphic of a car. I am sure all of us saw that ad. It invites the public to come and speak to the hearing process, to let its views be known.

Let's not prejudge what happens at that hearing. Let's stand back and allow the board to do the job that it is eminently qualified to do: to listen, to analyse and ultimately to decide in a fair and open way the range of rates for 1989.

**Mr. R. F. Johnston:** I am also upset that this is not a time for questions and comments on members' statements. It is really quite incredible.

I think when people look back on this day, December 6, 1988, commentators, editorial writers and columnists are all going to point to this day as the day that the bubble burst for the Liberal reform mythology in Ontario and the honeymoon finally started to evaporate.

What an incredible mix of issues fell apart for the Liberal government today. We have this insurance debacle, where the promises of the Premier in the dying days of the election have come back like mud to stick to him and his party, showing the incredible cynicism with which they approached the voters in that last election.

We have the lie being put to the Liberal Party's environmental policy in what is happening in Temagami. The whole notion that this was a civil libertarian government, that this was a government concerned about native rights, was fundamentally destroyed today. This was the day, in point of fact, when the government looked bad on all fronts, when the whole question of its integrity as a government was in question and on which it was found wanting.

It seems to me that people will remember this day for a long time when they reflect back on the smirks, the smugness and the complacency of the new Tory government over there. It is not a surprise that most of the red ties even have disappeared. It is only the hardliners like the member for High Park-Swansea (Mr. Fleet) and the member for Sudbury (Mr. Campbell), who have been lost in the back benches, who even make an attempt to keep that hue. Blue is absolutely in over there these days.

The third item that befell those members today, and I do not think they even seem to understand yet the importance of what this watershed has been, was the announcement by the Minister of Community and Social Services (Mr. Sweeney) today. He put the lie to their being social reformers. He came in here with his tail between his legs, having been pole-axed by the Treasurer (Mr. R. F. Nixon) last night.

**Mr. Fleet:** Oh, what nonsense.

**Mr. R. F. Johnston:** This is not nonsense. Yesterday he said he gave three proposals to the cabinet and the Treasurer and he was hoping for



the best. He was hoping they would accept what he was saying, which was, "If we turn down Judge Thomson's request for minimal increases for the poor in this province, we will be seen to have no integrity around social issues."

He gave us three potential scenarios to follow, and the Treasurer stuck him with the worst. He stuck him with just a flat five per cent increase: "That is the best you are going to get. Forget the Thomson commission." In fact, all the government can say is that, "As of today, for the next three months you can start to negotiate with us, as the rest of cabinet, around Thomson."

Three major issues—the environment, protecting the middle class and their concerns about auto insurance and protecting the poor—have all collapsed on the government today and its true colours have come through. This is a very important day, which I hope will never be forgotten.

I want to come back to the issue that is specifically at hand, and that is the motion, ironically, put forward by the Conservative caucus on auto insurance, which reminds us of that commitment by the Premier in Cambridge, with three days to go in a campaign, feeling that perhaps the one weakness in stopping him getting his massive majority might be that auto insurance plank. In responding to our party's very specific platform, a public auto insurance plan, spelled out as it was prior to this, he made a commitment in Cambridge which says, "I have a very specific plan to lower insurance rates."

He attacked us as a party continually at that time, if I can find the report from the Cambridge paper—in fact, it is not from the Cambridge paper; it is from the Toronto Star, the government's paper—which basically attacked us for being inaccurate, for being pie in the sky, for not dealing in reality, and then basically said he was dealing with specifics; he had a specific plan that would lower rates.

**Mr. Mackenzie:** Lower?

**Mr. R. F. Johnston:** Lower rates.

**Mr. Wildman:** Not higher.

**Mr. R. F. Johnston:** If he had meant it—and he would not admit even today whether he had meant honestly that he was proposing that and it was not just a tactic to diffuse the one issue he was concerned about that might hurt his chances of getting a massive majority—but if he were honest, then he would be admitting today:

"I'd hoped that we could do that, but the plan that I have been putting forward, in fact, has been an abject failure. I can't see us getting away with less than the nine per cent increases we have

already seen. I am presuming that some kind of accommodation of this latest report, these mammoth increases of 35 or 40 per cent that are looking to be very likely is an offshoot of our policies that I did not think would end up in these terms."

Instead of being an abject apologist, like the member for York East (Ms. Hart) today, he would be saying, "We've made an error." We understand how serious this is, because we know what happened in Manitoba when the Manitoba New Democratic Party government made a major error on this kind of issue.

Instead the Premier is being, if I dare use the term in my new incarnation, barefaced about this. He is now basically saying that this is what the plan was:

"That is the way it is in the game of politics. We make some promises that we mean. We make an awful lot of others that we do not mean at all. You, the people of Ontario, have been taken by us, the Liberal Party. You have been taken to the cleaners by the Liberal Party of Ontario, and it is too bad if you bought our mix of fabrication that we perpetrated on you, whether it was around educational finance, whether it was around the fact that we are social reformers, whether it was around the fact that we are environmentally concerned, whether we really want to protect native rights in Ontario or whether we were going to do what we said we would do, which was to lower rates for auto insurance and 'We have a specific plan to do so.' You should never believe a Liberal, because we do not mean what we say. We say what we say just to get elected, and when we are there, we will do whatever the heck it is we want to do."

That is a lesson which has come home to roost on December 6, 1988, in a way in which I do not think any of the Liberal members would have expected it to happen, which is going to be a cloud from under which it is going to be very, very difficult to clamber out without a great smell hanging over them for a long time about what they are willing to stiff the people of Ontario with.

**1650**

If they think they are going to get away with the kind of increases that have taken place, the kind that are about to take place and the kind that the Premier promised us would not take place and that they are going to get off scot-free with this, they are crazy. Because the people of Ontario will know who they really are, will understand why their ties have changed to blue and in the next election will look for a real social-reform

party, will look for a party that will really protect the average driver in Ontario and will not be choosing the Liberals.

Those backbenchers who thought they were Liberals and part of a Liberal government, better get at this cabinet before it is too late and make them understand what it means to be Liberal and what the symbols of liberalism are all about. If they do not do that, there are not going to be 94 of them next time; they will be lucky if there are 24.

As an opposition member, I revel in this kind of day on which they can make such profound errors and on which the Premier could get up with such profound arrogance to try to outmatch William Grenville Davis at his best.

**Mr. Pope:** It is a privilege for me to participate in this debate and to say to the people of Ontario that we are here today debating car insurance rates that the men and women of this province will pay over the next few years because of a decision of the Premier and the Liberal government of Ontario.

We have had in recent media reports over the last few days in the city of Toronto and throughout Ontario, startling headline news that men and women of this province will pay up to 40 per cent more for automobile insurance in Ontario over the next two years because of a decision for which the Liberal Party and the Liberal government of Ontario is responsible.

For the second time in two years, we have the prospect of a provincial government in this country making a damaging mistake about the people's response to substantial increases in automobile insurance rates. It was the number one issue in the Manitoba provincial election, which was held earlier this year, and which led to the defeat of the New Democratic Party government in that province when there was a rate increase in automobile insurance and additional cost in the government-run plan that the people were not prepared to accept. They demonstrated on the steps of the Legislature of Manitoba and voiced their objections to the rate increases proposed by the Manitoba New Democratic Party government and put the New Democratic Party into third place in the Legislature because of it, I believe.

Now we have the prospect of a Liberal Party government in Ontario proposing to do exactly the same thing: give unwarranted permission for unwarranted increases in insurance premiums of up to 40 per cent that everyone in this province will pay to drive their automobiles in the next couple of years. That is 40 per cent more that men and women in this province will pay for the

privilege of driving an automobile. It is an unwarranted increase.

What is the response of the Premier, as quoted in a Toronto newspaper yesterday? He says he will leave the decision in the hands of the insurance board under Mr. Kruger and will see what happens. That is the leadership that the Premier is prepared to give to this issue. That is how much he is prepared to intervene for the men and women who are driving automobiles across this province. He will leave it in the hands of the board and will see what happens. That is his response. He will not step in to protect men and women driving in this province who are paying these insurance premiums. He will leave it in someone else's hands.

I would remind members that this is the same Premier whose only response when there was criticism of high automobile insurance rates in this province was to set the system into place to have a rate review board to give them this authority and allow them to make the decisions that will increase their automobile insurance rates by up to 40 per cent. That is the Peterson formula, to let that board exist, to give it the criteria that allows it to do this and to put in place the studies and the mechanisms to increase your automobile insurance rates by 40 per cent in different parts of Ontario. That is the Peterson formula. That is what the Liberal Party is offering to you, the people of Ontario.

What is the basis of the complaint of the opposition members, the members of the New Democratic Party and the members of the Progressive Conservative Party? I think it is very important that the people understand the context of our objection to this system and the consequences for the people of Ontario.

On September 8, 1987, during the course of an election campaign in Cambridge, the Premier speaks on automobile insurance. The headline of the article is, "New Democratic Party Basing Insurance Plan Just on Wishes, Premier Says." This is the article, I say to the people of this province, that contains the direct quotes of the Premier on what his goals, as a majority government, will be for your auto insurance rates for the next four years. This is what he says:

"If the Liberal government is returned to office in Thursday's election, it will reintroduce legislation to freeze insurance rates, require rates to be set according to drivers' records, not age and sex, and roll back by 20 per cent rates for taxi drivers and young male drivers who now pay the highest premiums because they are considered a high-risk group.' Dismissing raised charges of



being an insurance industry apologist, Petersons says, 'I have been called lots of worse things than that. We have a very specific plan to lower insurance rates,' he said, although he refused to estimate how much his plan would reduce rates."

I want to repeat that quote: "We have a very specific plan to lower insurance rates." That is what the Premier is reported to have said in the newspapers across this province on September 8, 1987. He has never reduced auto insurance rates since he was elected. He is breaking his promise. He allowed a nine per cent rate increase in the first year he was in office and he is now prepared to sit back and let the chips fall where they may as 40 per cent auto insurance rate increases come in for the people of Ontario.

This is the same man who 15 months ago promised he would reduce rates. He promised he would reduce rates and now he is going to allow them to increase. These Liberal promises made during the election campaign have been broken time and time again, and the Premier does not even apologize for saying one thing during an election campaign and doing exactly the opposite when he gets into office.

It is not just with this; it is with so many other things. Not only that, he has not ended, even in this proposal, the discrimination against drivers in various parts and districts of Ontario based on where they live. He has not ended that discrimination at all. You will recall that the specific complaints in the 1987 provincial election, raised by members of the New Democratic Party and by others, had to do with auto insurance rates in northern Ontario, particularly in northwestern Ontario, as the members of that party will tell you.

What do we now have in the Mercer recommendations? We have something called proposed differentials on the basis of board territories. What does it show? On a province-wide average of 1.00, if you live in territory 20, which is the district of Cochrane, that is, Timmins, Iroquois Falls, Black River, Matheson, Hearst, Mattice, Kapuskasing, Smooth Rock Falls and Cochrane, if you live in Algoma, if you live in the district of Manitoulin, if you live in the district of Sudbury, if you live in the district of Nipissing and if you live in East Ferris, your differential is going to be 1.38, or in Windsor, 1.36. That means, compared to a base rate of \$621 in Belleville, you will be paying \$975 if you live in Windsor or if you live in the district of Cochrane.

How about if you happen to live in northwestern Ontario, the very region of the province

where the highest insurance premiums were being paid, that led the members of the New Democratic Party and others to object to insurance premiums being paid by the people in northwestern Ontario? Let's look at that because that is territory 23.

### 1700

Territory 23 is the district of Kenora, the district of Rainy River, part of the district of Thunder Bay, the corporation of the townships of Oliver, Shuniah and Gorham. That is all territory 23 northwestern Ontario outside of the city of Thunder Bay. You will be in territory 23 and your differential is 1.63, the highest in the province.

In spite of the fact that this is the problem the Premier promised to address, that the Liberal Party promised to reform when they got into office, it still has the highest differential rate in the province and it will continue to be so. The Premier will allow it to continue. There will be no help for the driving public of northwestern Ontario because the Premier is going to leave it in the hands of the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board, and we will see what happens.

That is not leadership. That is not what the Premier promised on September 8, 1987. Once again, he has broken his word. It is time that the people threw this crew out because they will not live up to their promises and they will not honour their commitments made to the people during election campaigns. They do not deserve the support of the people of the province.

**Mr. J. B. Nixon:** I was surprised that I would even have an opportunity to speak on this issue today. I had a very busy schedule. None the less, I think that the third party decided this was the time for an emergency debate, so here we are today addressing a matter which they consider to be an emergency.

I ask myself, why is this an emergency? What happened that caused them to think that somehow, somewhere, something in this domain, this province, had happened to suggest that there was an emergency? What happened? Let's look at it. An independent consultant delivered a report to a quasi-judicial tribunal. The report says various things. Various members in this House have said various things. The board is not bound by this report. The board can throw it out just like that. It does not mean anything more than we want it to mean. But unfortunately, the opposition wants it to mean a lot.

I say to the opposition, the board has a job to do. Quite specifically, its job is to set rates which are fair, neither excessive nor inadequate.

**Mr. Wildman:** The board isn't going to lower rates and the board said they were going to have lower rates.

**The Acting Speaker:** Order. The opposition will have an opportunity to speak in another 10 minutes.

**Mr. J. B. Nixon:** That is its mandate. That is the mandate which it will apply to the job it has to do, regardless of what any independent consultant says, regardless of what the members opposite may say or may want to say.

In fact, I was looking at the newspaper yesterday. An advertisement was placed by the board: "Auto Insurance Rates Proposal. Public Hearing. The auto board will commence a public hearing beginning December 12, 1988, to consider auto insurance rates to be effective in 1989. Independent consultants have now issued their proposal for these rates. Copies are available." There is your copy. You have read it and we have read it.

The board is not bound by this proposal. You read it. Public participation in the hearings is essential.

**Mr. D. S. Cooke:** The rates are up nine per cent already, without the board.

**Mr. J. B. Nixon:** The member for Windsor-Riverside should listen. I repeat. I ask him to listen. Public participation in the hearings is essential. He has the right to be heard. He should go up there and be heard if he objects.

Interjection.

**Mr. J. B. Nixon:** I am glad to hear that. He will be there. In fact, what surprises me is who has brought this emergency debate to this House. It is not the official opposition, it is the third party. You remember that this legislation went through committee hearings, the standing committee on the administration of justice toured the province under the able chairmanship of the member for Brampton South (Mr. Callahan). They were extensive hearings, indeed.

The third party was there. The member for Leeds-Grenville was there. What did he say when he heard about this bill during the course of the committee hearings? He was upset about its police powers. He was upset that it had the same powers as the Ontario Securities Commission and various agricultural boards. That is what upset the member for Leeds-Grenville. He thought this legislation was too intrusive, that government should not be involved in the business of auto insurance, that the government was treading the slippery slope to socialism. He thought the free market should prevail, the free

market where rates were going up exponentially in 1985 and 1986. He said: "Let the free market prevail. It does a good job. We don't need a board to review and set rates."

Where would we be without the the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board, I ask? The 35 per cent to 40 per cent a consultant says is needed might be minimal compared to what the free market would have dictated. That is what the third party wanted: the free market. It is hypocritical, indeed, for members of the third party to bring before this House an emergency debate on legislation which they, quite fairly, opposed in the a standing committee, but opposed it because they believed in the free market.

They never stood up during the election and said: "Let's watch those insurance companies. They're gougers. They're ripoff artists." The member for Nipissing never said that. The member for Cochrane South (Mr. Pope) never said that. They ignored the insurance companies and they ignored consumers because it is not in that party's interests. This emergency debate is purely a political shenanigan, indeed, sham, because one consultant has issued a report calling for substantial rate increases to an independent board.

Now let's talk about the official opposition. What does the opposition party want to do? They want to take over the insurance companies. They want to run them themselves, because these men of the opposition can run the insurance business better than the business which has been doing it for 60 or 100 years.

What happens, I ask, when they do? When they do take it over, as they have done in Manitoba, as they have done in Saskatchewan, as they have done in British Columbia, we find that not only do rates increase more than 20 per cent a year as approved by cabinet in those socialist, I might add, provinces; what is worse, you get ministers of the crown fiddling with the books, telling the auditors not to disclose liabilities on the order of \$60 million or \$70 million. It happened in Manitoba. That is what an election was fought over: auditors being told by a minister of the crown to bury the losses of the Manitoba Public Insurance Corp. That is the solution of the opposition party.

I put it to you, Mr. Speaker, that there is only one party which has come forward with a solution, and it came forward with a solution which will bring to this province automobile insurance rates which are fair, neither excessive nor inadequate. The board has a job to do,



without political interference. It has been doing a good job and it will continue to do a good job, because there are very able and intelligent men and women on that board, supported by an excellent staff, who will have the benefit of full public hearings that none of the members here will have.

I dare say I am concerned that the member for Windsor-Riverside may not appear at those public hearings, even though he is invited to. That is his job, to represent the public, but I do not hear him saying: "I'll be there." It is much easier to sit here in the House and debate an emergency that really does not exist at all.

The members are right. The Premier did say something about automobile insurance rates in the election, and the member for Windsor-Riverside wants this debated. I am happy to do that. The Premier said he had a very specific plan, and the plan is composed of many, many elements. The members ain't seen all of them yet.

The problem is that all they have to rant and rave about, unfortunately, is an independent consultant's report. Unfortunately, it is pretty thin material to make a speech on. It is even thinner material to have an emergency debate on. None the less, the members opposite seem willing and to desire to entertain themselves on the basis of—once again, I add—an independent consultant's report.

1710

Be that as it may, one of the jobs of the board is to establish risk criteria that accurately reflect the risk associated with individual drivers and car owners, something that every insurance corporation, whether it is public or private, does and will continue to do.

I do not find that objectionable. What this government found objectionable was the use of age, sex and marital status as a basis for discrimination—and disability, I might add. We found that objectionable, just as, in the 1950s in the United States, the Supreme Court found the use of race and religion to be objectionable as risk criteria in insurance. We agreed and got rid of those objectionable risk criteria, because we thought it was right. That is important.

Another thing that we are doing is setting a set of risk ranges for prices to be charged which cap the top rate that will be permitted to be charged for any risk criterion, something that has never been done before.

In the course of doing that, the board has to look at what drives the cost of premiums. Whether you are looking at a public insurance

corporation or a private insurance corporation, it is the cost of claims that drives the cost of premiums. I would submit to the House that that is what the president of the Insurance Bureau of Canada said, the president of Autopac, and what the private insurers here will say. It is a problem that we all have to address. But I say in terms of this independent consultant's report, it ain't over until it is over. Hold your breath and wait for the decision of the board.

**Mr. Mackenzie:** The issue at stake here is one, very clearly, of both the credibility and the integrity of this government. What has happened today just adds to a long list of serious questions the public can ask in terms of just how long the people can be lied to and whether it will wash.

Let me say very clearly that both of the old parties have opposed the position this party has taken in terms of public auto insurance. We fought the last campaign on it. We made no bones about what we believed. We argued that the nonprofit way was by far the best way to insure people.

I would like to point out that Mel Swart, my colleague, tried desperately to get this Liberal government to study the western provinces where they have the plan in place. We have heard some criticism of it here today. This government flatly refused to widen that inquiry to cover the three provincial plans. That was the Liberal government that refused to consider those three provincial plans.

I want to make a point. I will leave it there with the members of this House. There have been Conservative, Liberal and Social Credit governments elected in those provinces after the New Democrats put in place public auto insurance. Why have they not, in a single one of those provinces and on a single occasion, tried to rescind those public auto insurance plans? I will tell members darn well why they have not: because they would not get away with it, because the people like them. Sure, we made a mistake in Manitoba. We had gone several years without an increase, as most of the members know, and it was a stupid move, I suppose, doing it all in one year. But it was done publicly, the public knew what was going on and we paid the price for it. The facts are that all three of those provinces have plans that are cheaper than the auto insurance for the people here in Ontario, considerably cheaper.

Now let's take a look at something else. This government was under fire in the last election, before it got its big majority, on the auto insurance issue probably as much as on any issue



and, thanks probably to my colleague Mel Swart more than anybody else. It got through to them.

I want to quote from the April 23 statement that the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology made: "It is clear to the general public and it is clear to me—the automobile insurance rate structure is arbitrary," said the minister at a Queen's Park media conference. "While overall profitability increases, some consumers continue to pay unjustifiably higher premium rates with no recourse for their shabby treatment in the marketplace."

The minister said the government had deliberately given the insurance industry both the time and the opportunity to voluntarily improve market fairness, but the response has been inadequate.

Never mind. Let's just deal with that for a minute. Whether he liked it or not—because it is obvious now that this government is an apologist for the insurance industry—he had to admit that there were real problems in terms of the private coverage of automobile insurance purchasers in Ontario.

The Liberal Party made a major commitment, most of it towards the end of that election campaign, based on the campaign that we had launched and the fact that people were asking questions—I know they were asking them in my own riding and across this province—about public auto insurance vis-à-vis the problem we were having with private insurance coverage in Ontario.

That led to some rather strong attacks on our party by the leader of the Liberal Party, now the Premier. I do not think it can be stressed too often, and I hope the public is listening and I hope it registers with all of the citizens in Ontario, that in acknowledging that there were problems, but denying that our approach was the good one, the Premier did say, "We have a very specific plan to lower insurance rates," although he refused to estimate how much his plan would reduce the rates.

There is no question exactly what the commitment was of this Premier. I could go on to some of his other quotes, in which he said, "Hey, your approach is not right." In effect, a little stronger than that: "We've got better answers to the problem." And he set up the board.

It is interesting. When this board was set up by this government, what do we find? We find that the figures they have used to come up with the possibility of as much as a 40 per cent increase were supplied by the automobile insurance industry. Now, that may be all right as far as both

the Liberals and the Conservatives are concerned, but I know from my own dealings in trade union negotiations that you do not just automatically accept the company's figures. You look for some independent verification. We did not have that. What we had was holus-bolus acceptance of the insurance industry's figures. And what do its figures say? Well, its figures say that, of total premiums earned, of \$3,149,000,000, a 40 per cent increase would mean \$1,260,000,000 more in gross earned premiums. The insurance industry also said in 1987 that it had lost money. It did not. That was not the truth either.

We get this kind of figure, this kind of potential increase, which this government is willing to run with at the moment. It may not be what finally comes up. That may be part and parcel, I guess, of the job we are trying to do here today to bring back a little bit of honesty to this government, but that is what it comes up with in the report that is the reason for this debate.

All members of this House will forgive me if I say that we know where the Tories stand on it, honest and upfront, although I totally disagree with their position on it. You know, the real battle is with the Tories, who say, "Hey, we don't believe in a public plan." I think this debate is a little bit phoney in the way it has been conducted, but they say that very clearly. They never have. We have always known where they stood.

The facts are that the Liberal Party does not believe in it any more than the Tory party does. The real problem is, who is getting the biggest donations from the insurance industry? Take a look at some of the returns. That is really what is at stake here.

The difference in the two parties is an absolute opposition to a public plan from the Conservative Party, and the Liberal Party, whose members talk like New Democrats when they are up against it in an election campaign and say: "Hey, we've got to do something. There is something wrong with the auto insurance plan. We're going to come up with a board." But the minute they are elected with a big majority, that has gone right down the drain and they show their true colours, that they really did not mean it. They will talk like New Democrats, but they will not act like them. They act even more right wing than the Conservative Party. I think that message has to get through to the people in this province.

I think the other thing that we should take a clear look at is what has really happened. I think my colleague the member for Scarborough West



was right on today when he said that today was not a particularly good day for the Liberal Party.

**Mr. Laughren:** He said there was an odour.

**Mr. Mackenzie:** An odour is probably the mildest way to put it, but I ask the public in Ontario to take a look at this, to take a look at the Premier, the leader of the Liberal Party, and to take a look at the Liberal Party now that it has its big majority in these chambers and to take a look at what has happened over the last short period of time.

Sunday shopping: At least some of them supposedly were against it. All of a sudden, we are now having a long debate in this province over a total about-face from what the public thought was the position of this party.

1720

Sales tax increases: We had a debate just the other day on them. The Treasurer was always dead set against these. It is the very first major tax, a \$1-billion grab, that he brings in after they get their big majority.

Workers' compensation: Never before have we seen a bill as regressive, that is going to hurt workers as much. But all of a sudden it comes in from this Liberal government now that it has its big majority.

Free trade: We all remember the debates and the arguments we have had in this House: "There will be no deal if this and this and this commitment is not met." They got their big majority and they have dropped the ball so fast it makes your head spin.

They have deceived the people of Ontario on every one of these issues. They have done it on plant closure and safety and health legislation. We have waited a year and a half now and we do not see the legislation; we are not hearing it at all. That was something this Premier put his signature to, and we are not seeing it in this House.

Now we have auto insurance. I could go back, but I will not, to his statement once again: "We have a plan, a positive, a definite plan to reduce the insurance rates for the people in the province of Ontario." What is happening? We are seeing today, in the approach they have started to take, that this promise did not mean a bit more than any of the other promises that were made by the Premier and the Liberal Party in the province of Ontario.

I think the message—and I think today probably did more to drive it home than any other day since the majority was elected to this House—is that you cannot trust this Premier, you cannot trust this party. It seems what is happening is that the people of this province have been given a

number of positions that, in fact, were not the truth. You really have to wonder how long they are going to get away with lying to the people of Ontario.

That is really what is at stake: the integrity, the honesty of the Liberal government of Ontario, which has backed off issue after issue that affects ordinary people, the latest one being the issue of automobile insurance, where it clearly has fumbled the ball here, just as it did on sales tax increases, Sunday shopping, workers' compensation, plant closures and free trade. On every one of the issues where they made commitments, they have backed off, and that message has to get through to the people of Ontario.

**The Acting Speaker:** If I might just interject here a moment, we seem to be treading a fine line on parliamentary language. When a member has the floor, the member has the right to address the House without interjection. I hope that we would all respect one another and the rights of one another.

**Mr. Villeneuve:** I too rise with some degree of apprehension to discuss the Mercer report, which was used, in theory, by the Premier and by the Liberal candidates coming to the general election of September 1987 stating emphatically that the Premier had a specific plan to reduce auto insurance rates.

I find it somewhat strange that the member for York Mills (Mr. J. B. Nixon) would tell the Legislature and the members of this Legislature to be heard. Well, they are great people to tell us to be heard. I distinctly remember sitting on the standing committee on administration of justice listening to presentation after presentation regarding Sunday shopping.

This government was elected on an anti-Sunday-shopping platform. Immediately after, about a year ago, the Solicitor General (Mrs. Smith) made an about-flip totally. We now have the Premier doing a total about-flip. His quotes of September 7, 1987, bear repeating: "You can say anything you want, but the point is, if you aspire to government, you've got to be credible and base things you say on accurate information, not just wishes and theories."

That is the credibility that this government and this Premier were talking about. It is what we are discussing in emergency debate today, a 35 per cent to 40 per cent increase in auto insurance rates when indeed the Premier told us he had a specific plan to reduce auto insurance rates. Under rather intense questioning today, he did not even skate well on the issue. He did not

answer, and he certainly did not outline his specific plan to reduce auto insurance rates.

I come from an area of Ontario very close to the province of Quebec. They have a different type of insurance over there from what we have. I took time to phone a high-profile insurance agent in my riding who happens to be situated very close to our neighbours in Quebec. The plan over there is a combination of no-fault and private insurance. I specifically asked to compare the rates of a specific situation: a car owner-driver in the city of Montreal and one here in the city of Toronto.

In Montreal, for \$1 million liability coverage, \$250 deductible on collision, \$50 deductible on comprehensive, the annual premium is \$675. In Toronto, here in Ontario, for identical coverage the total premium is \$567. That is a difference of more than \$100. The real kicker in this one is that in Quebec, under a system where there is government intervention, the automobile driver, in order to obtain his driver's licence and the licence on his vehicle, also has to pay additional insurance.

Therefore, with the interventionist situation in our sister province—and no one has mentioned a great deal about Quebec—they have considerably higher premiums, exactly what is happening here in Ontario after having received by this government, and particularly by this Premier, a short year and three months ago, assurance that we would not have an increase in auto insurance, that he had a specific plan for the reduction of automobile insurance premiums.

As we can see in Manitoba, the Pawley government went from government to third place less than one year ago strictly on automobile insurance premiums. It is rather ironic that we would be discussing this in this chamber today, because this is what will happen to this government. Inevitably, it must follow. When we see 35 per cent to 40 per cent increases on the same day the Minister of Community and Social Services scratches a great deal to find a five per cent increase for those people who are receiving some social assistance from this same government, I think it is rather ironic and certainly sad.

I have a couple of cases here that I think are worth mentioning, because they apply to yours truly very particularly. A 50-year-old driver from Scarborough: I happen to be that age, though not from Scarborough, and I have an 18-year-old son at home who also drives the family car. The increase in automobile insurance premiums for this situation—and this strikes home—is an increase of 65 per cent. I also have two daughters,

who were not being charged because they have not had accidents. They are stated on the insurance policy. I have two daughters, both under 25. They drive the family car. That is an increase of 37 per cent.

That is from the same Premier and the same government who told us they had a specific plan to reduce automobile insurance premiums. Those who are in the age bracket I am in can look around their kitchen tables tonight at those who are eating supper and just figure out the 200 per cent increase they will be paying if they happen to have a son and a daughter sitting with them.

This is the same government, the same Premier, who tell us they will have hearings. Great; he will have hearings. Again, remember the Sunday shopping hearings? Well over 90 per cent of the people who made presentations sincerely, earnestly and honestly believed they were being listened to. Go to the standing committee on administration of justice right now and see how well they were listened to. No one can even put an amendment in this particular legislation. No one in this government is listening.

They have 94 members and they feel that that gives them the absolute right, the absolute power, the absolute everything just to bulldoze their way through. They are not even prepared to answer questions that were put to the Premier today. He did not even skate well on the questions that were put to him.

1730

In summary, look at anything in any area where government has pried itself into private industry, private business. I do not care what they call it. They can call it no-fault. They can actually say and try to make the people believe that through some magic formula they will be reducing automobile insurance rates. The plan the Premier had is long gone. I would suggest that the plan never existed. The plan was there for a September 10 date with the public of Ontario. That was the plan. The result was a large majority, and the plan disintegrated immediately following the results of that general election.

In conclusion, I am very disappointed that this government sees fit to nail the public of Ontario with a 35 to 40 per cent increase following statements that just have a great deal of noncredibility. It is a rather sad day for this province. Certainly the people of Ontario are not about to forget the situation that occurred here on December 6 whenever they go back to vote on a government that did lead them down the garden path.



I conclude with the Toronto Star headline: "Car Insurance Could Cost 40 Per Cent More." If it were in any other paper, we might have some doubts about it, but it is coming out in the Liberal mouthpiece of the government of Ontario and we have to take it for what it is worth.

**The Acting Chairman:** The pages have asked me to draw to your attention the fact that the clock does not appear to be working. It is now well past 5:30 p.m. We will have to guide ourselves by the digital clock.

**Hon. Mr. Elston:** I was really prepared to go for as long as the clock stayed before six. I guess this means I have less time than I realized.

I have been quite interested in the debate as it has turned here today, because it really evidences for us some of the great weaknesses in our opposition colleagues. Where are they indeed when it comes to protecting the consumers?

**Mr. Villeneuve:** We are not misleading as the government is, Murray.

**Hon. Mr. Elston:** No, not in the literal sense. In the figurative sense, where are the members opposite when it comes to protecting the consumers of this particular province? Where are those people who are officially sponsoring this resolution? This is of course something interesting in itself, bearing in mind that these particular people are stealing—at least apparently trying to steal—the issue away from the official opposition. These people, the people in the Progressive Conservative Party, had been very quiet about this.

What are they talking about when they talk about protecting consumers, when they talk about this emergency debate we are designing here today to finish? They are talking about doing more, and not even doing more to consumers. They are going to implement over a time period of seven years or something some number they are not even prepared to tell consumers the adequacy of. They are prepared to let the industry do exactly as it has done before, without letting consumers come up with the data behind the rate-setting which has gone on to this date.

This particular auto board, which has done a lot to eliminate the mystery in the rate-setting structure, will provide the consumers with timely information so they can compare the products offered by various companies in the marketplace. In fact, the better informed the consumers are, the more productive and the more competitive the marketplace. I can say that type of activity is what we are looking to provide to consumers. Knowledge provides them with the benefit of an

understanding which to this point they have been unable to find.

What about the second party, the opposition party at the moment officially? They are wedded to a system which they say has worked well in a couple of other provinces but which, they must now acknowledge, saw extremely high increases in premiums not that long ago. What they have failed to tell the people of this province is that with respect to those publicly operated insurance programs, there are certain expenses which have not been fully provided a public airing because they have been funded by taxpayers' dollars.

They are hiding behind an inability to clearly set out the full costs of the management and running of those particular programs. I do not blame them for doing that. I do not blame them for clouding the issue and I do not blame the third party for attempting to cloud the issue.

I can tell the consumers of this province that we in the Liberal Party are dedicated to empowering them by providing them with the information that they need to make sensible, sensitive and timely decisions on the purchase of a product which is mandatory in this province: auto insurance.

This is not the only thing we are doing to assist the consumers of this province. We are providing initiatives in the Insurance Act which will see the end of certain practices which say, "We will give you deals in automobile insurance only if you give us the rest of your insurance business in the property line"—the so-called tied selling.

That issue is to be debated fully later on, but I can tell members that we are prepared to empower the consumers of this province to understand fully the product line which is available to them, to be able to understand what company X, company Y and company Z have to offer, and they will make informed choices. They will manage to underscore the necessity of keeping a very highly competitive nature active in this industry.

Let me tell members a little bit about the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board and what it is charged to do. The board is charged to take away the mystery that surrounds an industry which has caused problems right through the North American continent for consumers. Only from this point, everybody is concerned about the cost of auto insurance premiums and the fact that they are escalating.

What the board has said is that this is a problem and it wants to understand exactly why the problem exists. The board has set down a series of hearings which have been open to the public,

and do you know something, Mr. Speaker? In the course of each one of those hearings, the member for Leeds-Grenville, the member for Hamilton West (Mr. Allen), the member for Parry Sound (Mr. Eves), the member for any one of those opposition parties could have appeared in front of that board and said, "We want to tell you something." But those people had nothing to say, though they have another chance.

They can appear in front of this board as it goes on with the hearings that will start to deal with the proposed rates which the Mercer report has provided to the board. They can go there on Monday, December 12, along with the rest of the people who want to find a solution and work creatively to ensure that the consumers of this province are not disadvantaged when they bring together the rates for payment of auto insurance premiums.

There is some thought that the creation of a public insurance program should be done because the government of Ontario does not have to make a profit. There are some people who pull that line out of a particular editorial and say that because it is government money there is no cost associated with it. I can tell the honourable members here that to set up a structure there are costs associated with government money just like any other money, no money is free. There are charges that are associated with putting money aside to deal with the types of reserves and other matters which are needed to fund any kind of an insurance program.

Let us just understand that there is nothing associated with this particular program, that is auto insurance, which can be delivered for nothing. We must have an understanding of the costs. The auto insurance board is providing not only the members of this Legislature with an understanding of those costs, but also the people of this province with the same understanding.

The people in the province can participate along with all the other players in this game, consumers' associations, members of the industry, people who deliver the service through brokerage and otherwise, who have come constructively to this point in front of the auto board and provided timely and very helpful advice to the board as it has considered various issues along the way.

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What do we have today? What we have are a number of members who have at one point spoken, as the member for Algoma (Mr. Wildman) has, and who wish to speak again. But he has unfortunately been unable to appear in

front of the board where these decisions are being made, to speak in a timely and helpful manner to assist the board in carrying out its mandate, which is to put a fair premium, or at least a range of rates, in place for people. He has been unable to find his way to go to this stage to make that presentation.

But the member can still go. Starting on Monday, December 12, he can appear and tell us what he knows about the insurance business and make a presentation in front of the board. In fact, as I have been told by the chairman, and it is underscored in other areas, the board is willing to sit evenings and even at other times to accommodate the member's busy schedule, so that his helpful advice will be taken into account when we set the premiums through that board decision.

From my point of view, what we must understand is that the people of this province should know that there is no emergency in this province at this time with respect to auto rates. The board is doing what it was charged to do. They are holding the public hearings. They have a recommendation in front of them, a recommendation only, and their charge now is to take that recommendation along with other evidence that comes before them, along with other material, and assess whether or not the report and its recommendations are to be adopted.

They will do those things very professionally, as they have in the past; they will do those things very thoroughly, as they have in the past. As an example of what they have done in the past, I want people to understand that they took a classification suggestion at another hearing time and did a study on that, had their hearing on it and then modified it to fit the material which came before them. They did their job in a very professional and thorough manner.

I want the people of this province to understand that there is no emergency with respect to insurance premiums in this province at this time.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you.

**Hon. Mr. Elston:** This particular debate underscores the fact that the opposition really is not being straight with the citizens of this province.

**Mr. Allen:** I would like to participate in this debate and to comment upon the nature of the emergency which escapes the Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet (Mr. Elston). In passing, by way of commentary on one of his little notes, it would appear that he is not just the minister in charge of Management Board.

He also appears to be able to manage the truth with some facility in order to perpetuate the



myths that have been done year after year not only by the members opposite but by the members to my left, with respect to government-sponsored insurance in western Canada, the notion that somehow or other there are additional incomes that come into those plans from general revenues and costs that are not accounted and all the rest of it, in order to skew the rates that westerners—in particular, British Columbians, Saskatchewanians and Manitobans—pay for their insurance.

Let me just take the one simple example of what is always referred to, Manitoba, which in the late 1970s thought perhaps it would be useful and a very fair proposition to levy an additional tax on gasoline in order to make a charge across the users of the road system to provide for the costs of maintaining the road system. That was levied as a part of the tax system in Manitoba. Because it was levied on gasoline and because it was levied on motorists, it was assumed that the tax was also attached somehow or other to the insurance system.

When the government received certain criticisms that this taxation might appear that way, it decided that the argument was not worth the candle and gave up the tax and that was the end of the story.

That has been used as the great example from Manitoba as to how it is that somehow the nefarious public plan, which the people in Manitoba love so well, somehow leans upon public taxation and incorporates that into the calculation of premium costs. It has nothing to do with it whatsoever, and yet it is trotted out by the industry and it is trotted out by ministers of the crown who ought to be somewhat more responsible in their use of the facts when speaking in this Legislature.

I want to read a quotation from the much-quoted article that appeared in the *Toronto Star* of September 8, 1987, which has been used so often in this debate. It is a somewhat different quotation, "Peterson dropped in on small town fairs yesterday, watching a hay threshing contest in Milton and seeing his wife, Shelley, flip a rubber chicken into a pot at the Paris fair after he failed."

This might not seem to have any connection to the earlier material in this story, but for one thing, it might suggest that perhaps the Premier is not always successful in his enterprises and that perhaps he is bombing out on this one as well when it comes to automobile insurance. Certainly, all the earlier remarks make it quite clear why the Premier did not have the capability of flipping

the chicken into the pot. It is quite obvious that the references he makes to what is necessary to be credible simply fall flat because his own promises of lower premiums, of a systematic plan to keep premiums low and lower for Ontarians, simply was unproven by the facts as they unfolded, and by time as it unfolded.

Perhaps the other comment one might make on that little aside is that the chicken, after all, even in Shelley's hands, remained a rubber chicken and that what we have been given after the election by way of insurance fare is essentially the equivalent of a rubber chicken, nothing that would satisfy the consumers in Ontario with respect to their insurance rates.

Of course, it is true up to a point that the threatened rates that appear in the Mercer report, the 35 or 40 per cent, are not in place at this point in time, but anybody who knows the alarm with which Ontario drivers view their insurance costs, and anyone who views the practice of the board to date, namely, a constant drift upward in insurance rates, would realize that the important time to act and respond to this proposal—which comes, one would have to say, virtually directly from the insurance industry to the rate review board—is immediately we see this kind of proposal being made. No, it is not in place today, but it could easily be in place, figuratively speaking, tomorrow.

Since it is based on insurance company claims with respect to profitability, since the government made it quite plain when it set up the insurance review board that profitability would have to be kept in mind and since at that time the insurance companies, in spite of their profits, were claiming they were not profitable operations, we made it quite plain at that time that our expectation was that this review board would be the vehicle by which the insurance industry would be enabled to make its claims to profitability stick when it came to construing the rates that would be levied upon the drivers of Ontario.

There is every reason to fear at this point in time that what is being proposed in this most recent document by Mr. Mercer will come to pass and that we are in what might be called an incipient crisis, if not in a crisis that has immediately arrived, for the drivers of Ontario.

What we are also facing, of course, is a continuation of the kind of discrimination we have been trying to overcome. While in the past the discrimination has been sorted out in a slightly different way, what we have is a so-called new class plan that merely replaces age as a risk class with "years of driving experience,"

which is to say exactly the same thing all over again in so many words—as in point of fact, Mr. Mercer himself not long ago quite readily acknowledged, saying that “years of driving experience” was simply an exact surrogate or euphemism for age.

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As a member of a family that has two young drivers in it, one of whom is still in his teens and the other just escaped his teens, I have to say that “years of driving experience” amounts to precisely the same discrimination against two young drivers in our family who are thoroughly responsible, have driven many miles in the family car and have had no accident record whatsoever, and I do not anticipate any at their hands. Yet they still will continue to be discriminated against under the proposed rates that are being brought forward.

It is quite evident. Anybody who in any impartial capacity has ever examined the western plans against the auto insurance system in Ontario has come to the conclusion that they are fair, effective and cost efficient, that their returns for the premium dollar are unmatched in Ontario. That is in spite of the fact that the per insured automobile rate of accident and the per automobile rate of bodily injury insured in western Canada, in particular in Saskatchewan, are higher than in Ontario. That may strike some people as strange, but Ontario in fact has a low per insured vehicle rate of accident and bodily injury.

Why, given those facts, we should have a so much higher rate of auto insurance premium is simply quite inexplicable, unless one turns to the very structure of the industry itself, a competitive system through multiple deliverers that is quite inefficient, quite inappropriate and would provide much better service for us were it to be converted to a single public plan and operated as a driver-owned insurance system in Ontario.

**Mrs. Marland:** I must say, in rising today to speak in this emergency debate, that I would rather debate were not necessary on this subject. I would rather the Liberal government of Ontario was fulfilling its promises to the people of Ontario.

However, I do not have a choice because our Progressive Conservative caucus today found it necessary, in the interest of the people of Ontario, to move a resolution that we debate the report now before us in terms of the massive auto insurance premium increases that are going to be faced by the people of Ontario as a result of the Liberal government's mismanagement and as a

consequence of its failure to honour its commitment to introduce a very specific plan to lower insurance rates.

I suppose it is even significant that this report, Insurance Rate Proposal for Ontario Private Passenger Automobile, prepared by William M. Mercer Ltd., dated December 5, 1988, is bound in black. I think that in itself is significant.

I think it is significant that the people in Ontario today recognize this is a black day in Ontario, as it is every time we have something that comes before us that confirms again that the Premier and the members of the Ontario Liberal Party, as they campaigned around this province in 1987 with their promises of remedies and solutions for everybody's problem, were giving promises and assurances they never intended to fulfil.

In quoting from a newspaper in Toronto on September 8, 1987, I think it is important for me to read this into the record because it outlines very clearly what it is the people of Ontario are now facing.

“Meanwhile, Peterson repeated that if the Liberal government is returned to office in Thursday's election, it will reintroduce legislation to freeze insurance rates, require rates to be set according to drivers' records, not age or sex, and roll back by 20 per cent rates for taxi drivers and young male drivers, who now pay the highest premiums because they are considered a high-risk group.

“Dismissing Rae's charge of being an insurance industry apologist, Peterson said: ‘I have been called lots of worse things than that. We have a very specific plan to lower insurance rates,’ he said, although he refused to estimate how much his plan would reduce rates.”

I emphasize that he said “specific plan to lower insurance rates.”

I also want to quote a statement made by the then Minister of Financial Institutions (Mr. R. F. Nixon) in the Legislature on November 4, 1987, when he said:

“Our insurance board will be effective in meeting the needs of Ontario consumers. It will be a made-in-Ontario board with a fair hearing process open to full public scrutiny.

“The mandate of the Ontario Automobile Insurance Board will be to establish reasonable rates or rate ranges for all types of motor vehicle insurance within the risk classification system set by regulation and to hold public hearings on automobile insurance rates, inviting representations by all concerned parties.”

That was in November 1987.



**Mr. Villeneuve:** A 180-degree turn.

**Mrs. Marland:** In October of this year we hear again that, "Although in January the Minister of Financial Institutions, Robert Nixon, told the Legislature's justice committee, that the government had a very clear purpose in mind when it brought in the initiatives on car insurance, 'that purpose,' said Mr. Nixon, 'was and continues to be to ensure the protection of consumers and to bring stability and equity to the motor vehicle insurance market. It is our intention that all the facts be out on the table so that the public can understand the factors that go into the making of insurance rates they pay.'"

I have to say that with all of those grandiose statements, today we are faced with the reality as printed in the Mercer report. Obviously, now that the truth is out, we know those have been hollow, shallow, meaningless promises and assurances.

The only good news about this situation today, of course, is that the Liberal Party of Ontario will never again have the mandate from the people of Ontario that it received in September 1987, because the people of Ontario are intelligent, fair and responsible people and do not deserve to be treated with the sham and betrayal this Liberal government is foisting upon them.

The fact is that we do have these broken promises, one after the other. It does not matter what issue you pick, whether it is the fact it promised not to change Sunday shopping hours or whether it promised to lower insurance rates and promised not to increase taxes—promise, promise, promise. To suggest that the electorate in Ontario is so naïve it would fall for those promises ever again by the Liberal Party in Ontario is to be living in an unreal world.

I just want to say that in speaking about the real world that applies to my constituents—a suburban community such as Mississauga, a city of

400,000 people, has many thousands of people who have to commute to work—when I look at these insurance rates, it is going to be impossible for a lot of people in my community to be able to afford to drive their cars to work. The reality is that this Liberal government does not even believe in increasing the GO Transit service to give those people who cannot afford to drive and own their own motor vehicles an alternative as far as transportation is concerned.

The sad part about the incompetence of this government is that while they have made promises and broken them and while they have betrayed the people I represent in Mississauga, they are still going around with their big smiles, thinking they have this province under their own control. I suggest, with respect, that I hope in the future we will have more honesty from the government.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The time allocated for the emergency debate has now expired. The government House leader has a statement to make on the business of the House.

#### BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

**Hon. Mr. Conway:** For the information of the House, I would like to indicate the business for tomorrow. We will deal with third readings of bills 160, 66, 78, 139 and 140, and with second and third readings of private bills Pr6, Pr9, Pr18, Pr32, Pr42, Pr53, Pr55, Pr63 and Pr65, after which we will continue with the adjourned debate on the revenue bills, Bill 121, An Act to amend the Gasoline Tax Act, and Bill 122, An Act to amend the Retail Sales Tax Act. Assuming the conclusion of those matters, we will take a series of stacked votes at 5:45 p.m. tomorrow.

The House adjourned at 6 p.m.

**ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS\***

(130 seats)

First Session, 34th Parliament

**Lieutenant Governor: Hon. Lincoln M. Alexander, PC, QC**

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- |   |  |
|---|--|
| Adams, Peter (Peterborough L)   | <b>Fontaine, Hon. René</b> , Minister of Northern Development (Cochrane North L)           |
| Allen, Richard (Hamilton West NDP)  | <b>Fulton, Hon. Ed</b> , Minister of Transportation (Scarborough East L)                   |
| Ballinger, William G. (Durham-York L)   | Furlong, Allan W. (Durham Centre L)  |
| Beer, Charles (York North L)  | <b>Grandmaître, Hon. Bernard C.</b> , Minister of Revenue (Ottawa East L)                  |
| Black, Kenneth H. (Muskoka-Georgian Bay L)  | Grier, Ruth A. (Etobicoke-Lakeshore NDP)   |
| Bossy, Maurice L. (Chatham-Kent L)  | Haggerty, Ray (Niagara South L)  |
| <b>Bradley, Hon. James J.</b> , Minister of the Environment (St. Catharines L)        | Hampton, Howard (Rainy River NDP)  |
| Brandt, Andrew S. (Sarnia PC)   | Harris, Michael D. (Nipissing PC)  |
| Breaugh, Michael J. (Oshawa NDP)  | Hart, Christine E. (York East L)   |
| Brown, Michael A. (Algoma-Manitoulin L)   | Henderson, D. James (Etobicoke-Humber L)   |
| Bryden, Marion (Beaches-Woodbine NDP)   | <b>Hošek, Hon. Chaviva</b> , Minister of Housing (Oakwood L)                               |
| Callahan, Robert V. (Brampton South L)  | Jackson, Cameron (Burlington South PC)   |
| Campbell, Sterling (Sudbury L)  | Johnson, Jack (Wellington PC)  |
| <b>Caplan, Hon. Elinor</b> , Minister of Health (Oriole L)                            | Johnston, Richard F. (Scarborough West NDP)  |
| Carrothers, Douglas A. (Oakville South L)   | Kanter, Ron (St. Andrew-St. Patrick L)   |
| Charlton, Brian A. (Hamilton Mountain NDP)  | <b>Kerrio, Hon. Vincent G.</b> , Minister of Natural Resources (Niagara Falls L)           |
| Chiarelli, Robert (Ottawa West L)   | Keyes, Kenneth A. (Kingston and The Islands L)   |
| Cleary, John C. (Cornwall L)  | Kormos, Peter (Welland-Thorold NDP)  |
| Collins, Shirley (Wentworth East L)   | Kozyra, Taras B. (Port Arthur L)   |
| <b>Conway, Hon. Sean G.</b> , Minister of Mines (Renfrew North L)                     | <b>Kwinter, Hon. Monte</b> , Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Wilson Heights L) |
| Cooke, David R. (Kitchener L)   | Laughren, Floyd (Nickel Belt NDP)  |
| Cooke, David S. (Windsor-Riverside NDP)   | LeBourdais, Linda (Etobicoke West L)   |
| Cordiano, Joseph (Lawrence L)   | Leone, Laureano (Downsview L)  |
| Cousens, W. Donald (Markham PC)   | Lipsett, Ron (Grey L)  |
| Cunningham, Dianne E. (London North PC)   | Lupusella, Tony (Dovercourt L)   |
| Cureatz, Sam L. (Durham East PC)  | MacDonald, Keith (Prince Edward-Lennox L)  |
| <b>Curling, Hon. Alvin</b> , Minister of Skills Development (Scarborough North L)     | Mackenzie, Bob (Hamilton East NDP)   |
| Daigeler, Hans (Nepean L)   | Mahoney, Steven W. (Mississauga West L)  |
| Dietsch, Michael M. (St. Catharines-Brock L)  | <b>Mancini, Hon. Remo</b> , Minister without Portfolio (Essex South L)                     |
| <b>Eakins, Hon. John F.</b> , Minister of Municipal Affairs (Victoria-Haliburton L)   | Marland, Margaret (Mississauga South PC)   |
| <b>Edighoffer, Hon. Hugh A.</b> , Speaker (Perth L)                                   | Martel, Shelley (Sudbury East NDP)   |
| Elliot, R. Walter (Halton North L)  | Matrundola, Gino (Willowdale L)  |
| <b>Elston, Hon. Murray J.</b> , Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet (Bruce L) | McCague, George R. (Simcoe West PC)  |
| Epp, Herbert A. (Waterloo North L)  | McClelland, Carman (Brampton North L)  |
| Eves, Ernie L. (Parry Sound PC)   | McGuigan, James F. (Essex-Kent L)  |
| Farnan, Michael (Cambridge NDP)   | McGuinty, Dalton J. (Ottawa South L)   |
| Faubert, Frank (Scarborough-Ellesmere L)  | McLean, Allan K. (Simcoe East PC)  |
| Fawcett, Joan M. (Northumberland L)   | <b>McLeod, Hon. Lyn</b> , Minister of Colleges and Universities (Fort William L)           |
| Ferraro, Rick E. (Guelph L)   | Miclash, Frank (Kenora L)  |
| Fleet, David (High Park-Swansea L)  |  |



Miller, Gordon I. (Norfolk L)  
 Morin, Gilles E. (Carleton East L)  
 Morin-Strom, Karl E. (Sault Ste. Marie NDP)  
 Neumann, David E. (Brantford L)  
 Nicholas, Cindy (Scarborough Centre L)  
 Nixon, J. Bradford (York Mills L)  
**Nixon, Hon. Robert F.**, Deputy Premier,  
 Treasurer of Ontario and Minister of Eco-  
 nomics and Minister of Financial Institutions  
 (Brant-Haldimand L)  
**Oddie Munro, Hon. Lily**, Minister of Culture  
 and Communications (Hamilton Centre L)  
 Offer, Steven (Mississauga North L)  
**O'Neil, Hon. Hugh P.**, Minister of Tourism and  
 Recreation (Quinte L)  
 O'Neill, Yvonne (Ottawa-Rideau L)  
 Owen, Bruce (Simcoe Centre L)  
**Patten, Hon. Richard**, Minister of Government  
 Services (Ottawa Centre L)  
 Pelissero, Harry E. (Lincoln L)  
**Peterson, Hon. David R.**, Premier and Presi-  
 dent of the Council and Minister of Inter-  
 governmental Affairs (London Centre L)  
 Philip, Ed (Etobicoke-Rexdale NDP)  
**Phillips, Hon. Gerry**, Minister of Citizenship  
 (Scarborough-Agincourt L)  
 Poirier, Jean, Deputy Speaker and Chairman of  
 the Committees of the Whole House (Prescott  
 and Russell L)  
 Pollock, Jim (Hastings-Peterborough PC)  
 Polsinelli, Claudio (Yorkview L)  
 Poole, Dianne (Eglinton L)  
 Pope, Alan W. (Cochrane South PC)  
 Pouliot, Gilles (Lake Nipigon NDP)  
 Rae, Bob (York South NDP)  
**Ramsay, Hon. David**, Minister of Correctional  
 Services (Timiskaming L)  
 Ray, Michael C., Deputy Chairman of the  
 Committees of the Whole House (Windsor-  
 Walkerville L)  
 Reville, David (Riverdale NDP)  
 Reycraft, Douglas R. (Middlesex L)

**Riddell, Hon. Jack**, Minister of Agriculture and  
 Food (Huron L)  
 Roberts, Marietta L. D. (Elgin L)  
 Runciman, Robert W. (Leeds-Grenville PC)  
 Ruprecht, Tony (Parkdale L)  
**Scott, Hon. Ian G.**, Attorney General  
 (St. George-St. David L)  
 Smith, David W. (Lambton L)  
**Smith, Hon. E. Joan**, Solicitor General  
 (London South L)  
 Sola, John (Mississauga East L)  
**Sorbara, Hon. Gregory S.**, Minister of Labour  
 (York Centre L)  
 South, Larry (Frontenac-Addington L)  
 Sterling, Norman W. (Carleton PC)  
 Stoner, Norah (Durham West L)  
 Sullivan, Barbara (Halton Centre L)  
**Sweeney, Hon. John**, Minister of Community  
 and Social Services (Kitchener-Wilmot L)  
 Tatham, Charlie (Oxford L)  
 Velshi, Murad (Don Mills L)  
 Villeneuve, Noble (Stormont, Dundas and Glen-  
 garry PC)  
**Ward, Hon. Christopher C.**, Minister of  
 Education (Wentworth North L)  
 Wildman, Bud (Algoma NDP)  
**Wilson, Hon. Mavis**, Minister without Portfolio  
 (Dufferin-Peel L)  
 Wiseman, Douglas J. (Lanark-Renfrew PC)  
**Wong, Hon. Robert C.**, Minister of Energy  
 (Fort York L)  
**Wrye, Hon. William**, Minister of Consumer and  
 Commercial Relations (Windsor-Sandwich L)

\*The alphabetical list of members appears in each issue. Lists of the members of the executive council, parliamentary assistants and members of committees, brought up to date as necessary, are published in Hansard in the first and last issues of each session and on the first sitting day of each month.

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